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A STUDY  
OF  
AMERICAN LITERATURE

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## PREFACE

IN this volume the attempt has been made to distinguish the salient epochs in our literature, brief though the story is. The relation of the artist and his work to the general life of his time and of his people has been frequently recalled. This relation is especially illustrated in the chronological tables, which may be supplemented from the regular textbooks in American history.

Nevertheless, the treatment in our text itself is in the main biographical. That is, the effort has almost always been to make the single life appear an articulated and rational whole. This method craves far more space than was here available; but, as Miss Scudder remarks of her similar undertaking for English literature, any such volume as ours must serve merely as an introduction to far wider reading. The writer believes that biographical treatment is the most intelligible to the young reader. It also seems to him the most truthful. That the artist, more than other men, can escape largely from local or temporal limitations, and find his spiritual kin, seems undeniable; yet from his truest self he cannot escape. Even when the artistic activity seems most detached from the man, as in Hawthorne, or even in Poe, the work will be better understood by a sympathetic study of the life, the whole life.

The general policy has been to mention relatively few persons, in order to leave a definite impression as to each. The especial interests of students in school or college have been steadily considered. In particular, Hawthorne and Longfellow have been treated with relative fullness and somewhat critical method, because their works have, and should have, a very large part in our popular education. The competent and judicious teacher may prefer to throw more emphasis on other authors, Franklin, Irving, Emerson, or Lowell. In that case the materials are of course abundant and close at hand. The chronological tables are an integral portion of the work, and supply many items which may be missed in the text.

A fuller treatment of one group will be found in the author's "New England Poets," Macmillan, 1898. While the present book comes down to the year 1900, there is, naturally, no attempt to pass final judgment in detail on the career of men and women still living.

Many mistakes and inept statements have been corrected by Prof. C. E. Norton, Colonel T. W. Higginson, Prof. Stockton Axson, and other generous critics, but no one shares the responsibility for what remains. The writer and the publishers will be most grateful for the correction of errors in matters of fact.

## CONTENTS

### PART I

#### *THE AGE OF DEPENDENCE*

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	3

#### CHAPTER I

THE PIONEERS . . . . .	7
1. Beginnings of Virginia . . . . .	7
2. Plymouth Plantation . . . . .	14
3. The Character of the Puritans . . . . .	17

#### CHAPTER II

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY . . . . .	25
1. Winthrop's Diary . . . . .	25
2. The Cobbler of Agawam . . . . .	27
3. Roger Williams . . . . .	28
4. The Bay Psalm Book . . . . .	30
5. Anne Bradstreet . . . . .	31
6. Michael Wigglesworth . . . . .	32
7. Samuel Sewall . . . . .	33

#### CHAPTER III

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY . . . . .	46
1. Cotton Mather . . . . .	46
2. Jonathan Edwards . . . . .	48
3. Benjamin Franklin . . . . .	50
4. Revolutionary Literature . . . . .	55
5. Addenda . . . . .	59

#### CHAPTER IV

BEGINNINGS OF ROMANCE AND POETRY . . . . .	62
--	----

## CHAPTER V

	PAGE
<b>THE FIRST MASTERS . . . . .</b>	<b>78</b>
1. Washington Irving . . . . .	78
2. James Fenimore Cooper . . . . .	85
3. William Cullen Bryant . . . . .	91
4. The "Knickerbocker" Group . . . . .	96
5. Edgar Allan Poe . . . . .	98

## PART II

*THE NEW ENGLAND PERIOD*

<b>INTRODUCTION. CULTURE AND SCHOLARSHIP IN THE EAST . . . . .</b>	<b>113</b>
--	------------

## CHAPTER I

<b>THE CONCORD GROUP . . . . .</b>	<b>122</b>
1. Ralph Waldo Emerson . . . . .	122
2. Henry David Thoreau . . . . .	138
3. Margaret Fuller . . . . .	144
4. Other Friends of Emerson . . . . .	148

## CHAPTER II

<b>NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE . . . . .</b>	<b>151</b>
--------------------------------------	------------

## CHAPTER III

<b>THE LITERATURE OF ABOLITION . . . . .</b>	<b>173</b>
1. John Greenleaf Whittier . . . . .	175
2. Lydia Maria Child . . . . .	186
3. Harriet Beecher Stowe . . . . .	189

## CHAPTER IV

<b>THE CAMBRIDGE POETS . . . . .</b>	<b>197</b>
1. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow . . . . .	197
2. Oliver Wendell Holmes . . . . .	215
3. James Russell Lowell . . . . .	224

## CHAPTER V

	PAGE
LESS FAMILIAR NAMES . . . . .	241

## CHAPTER VI

THE HISTORIANS . . . . .	252
--------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER VII

THE ORATORS . . . . .	265
-----------------------	-----

## PART III

*THE NATIONAL EPOCH*

## CHAPTER I

GENERAL CONDITIONS . . . . .	291
------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER II

LITERATURE OF THE SOUTH . . . . .	301
-----------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER III

LATER NEW ENGLAND . . . . .	314
-----------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER IV

THE WEST . . . . .	326
--------------------	-----

## CHAPTER V

THE MIDDLE EAST . . . . .	337
---------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION . . . . .	351
----------------------	-----

---

INDEX OF AUTHORS AND WORKS . . . . .	371
--------------------------------------	-----

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INDEX . . . . .	379
---------------------------------	-----

TOPICS FOR ESSAYS OR LECTURES . . . . .	382
---	-----



PART I  
THE AGE OF DEPENDENCE  
(1607-1830)



# INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN LITERATURE

## INTRODUCTION

DIFFICULT as it is to declare precisely what constitutes a national literature, men generally agree that it should include, on the one hand, some adequate expression of the individual and national life, and, on the other, some approach to artistic beauty of form: in other words, some claim on lasting human interest.

National quality in literature.

We should always realize clearly that the whole advancing life of man, especially the progress of the Western Aryan on the European continent and on our own, is one unbroken story of many chapters. All earlier literature and art, from Homer to Kipling, enters into the history of every civilized race in Europe or America. Hence no literature since the Greek, if even that, has had a perfectly free spontaneous development from within. Roman culture was more than half Hellenic; colloquial Latin passed insensibly, in Gaul, into mediæval French; the speech, the literature, all the ideas and ideals of the French-speaking Norman, became an indivisible portion, perhaps the larger part, of the later Englishman's heritage, and therefore of our own.

Alien elements.

Again, through conversion to Christianity, even before the Conquest, both Saxon and Norman, and

Kelt as well, passed more or less under the sway of the Hebraic imagination, of Oriental thought. The favorite tales of our nurseries for generations have been largely Arabian. Even from the uttermost East, from Malays or Chinese, some myths seem to have come to find a home at our firesides. The very words we speak, like the foods and spices upon our table, should remind us of our debt to remotest ages, peoples, and regions. These things are not of our creation.

Dependence  
on England.

American literature, in particular, never sprang from native soil and roots. It is a gradual offshoot from the English, deriving its vitality from Shakespeare's land and speech. We may feel it our patriotic duty to believe that it has long since, like the bough of the mangrove tree, taken sturdy root in new soil, and declared its independence of the parent trunk. Yet for many years, certainly, even after our political and economic freedom was assured, our intellectual culture remained almost absolutely, even timidly, English. All this, be it repeated, was an inheritance only, in no sense ours alone.

Yet it will no longer be questioned that we ourselves have a complete and self-centered national life, which must eventually find full and adequate expression in language as in every form of useful and beautiful art. Already we have seen the birth on American soil of works which the world will not willingly let die. The tale of our literature is, however, a brief one, hardly a century in length, and we have good reason to hope that it is yet by no means half told. One purpose of such a volume as this must be to say to the youth of a new generation :—

Our youth-  
fulness.

"There will be other towers for thee to build;  
There will be other steeds for thee to ride;  
There will be other legends, and all filled  
With greater marvels and more glorified."

— LONGFELLOW'S *Castle-builders*.

But just as our political history and institutions, even the configuration of our coasts, mountains, and rivers, are the earliest subjects of our study, so, looking back with fond and modest pride and forward with eager hope, we should trace with peculiar tenderness the story of our national utterance thus far in speech. Happily we are, at least, already rich in poetry and romance especially fitted to bring delight to the heart of youth.

#### GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

The completest account of American literature is by Professor Charles F. Richardson, in two volumes. It closes with the year 1885. Professor Wendell's "Literary History of America" is recent, philosophic, and stimulating. E. C. Stedman has treated our poets only with a closer personal sympathy. A more recent work is "History of American Verse" to 1897, by E. L. Onderdonk (McClurg). Professor Moses Coit Tyler has written a most exhaustive account of literature in the colonial and revolutionary epochs, which will not soon be replaced. All these books, like the political histories of Parkman and Fiske, should be found in every school library. To them the present author confesses once for all his constant debt.

Many authors of the seventeenth century are quite inaccessible, and not one has been, or is likely to be, widely popular. For that period, and, indeed, somewhat later also, citations sufficient for all the needs of the schoolroom will usually be found in Stedman and Hutchinson's "Library of American Literature," Vols. I-XI (1888-1890). Every school not able to purchase this standard work should at least be provided at once with Prof. W. P. Trent's three miniature volumes of "Colonial Prose and Poetry" (Crowell).

Appleton's "Cyclopædia of American Biography" should be in constant service, and will usually supply more copious bibliographical references than could find space in a school book. Indispensable also for the teacher's desk is Oscar Fay Adams's "Dictionary of American Authors," Houghton, 1901. Donald G. Mitchell's two illustrated volumes on "American Lands and Letters" cover nearly the whole field in pleasant, chatty fashion, and would make attractive gifts or prizes. To Whitcomb's "Chronological Outlines of American Literature" every maker of text-books in this field is heavily in debt. The student will doubtless have in hand the excellent "Introduction to English Literature," by Miss Vida D. Scudder, to which the present volume is, in a sense, supplementary.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

One suggestion must be emphasized by repetition: that the present volume can serve only as an introduction to many larger and goodlier books. Especially after Irving is reached, the complete works of each author should always be at hand, in the classroom, while he is studied. The poems, essays, etc., mentioned in our text are, as a rule, naturally, those to which we desire to direct teacher and student first of all. Some previous familiarity with our favorite poets and romancers is taken for granted. A list of eighty subjects for special treatment will be found at the end of this book. Each can be discussed fully by the teacher, or assigned for an essay by a pupil.

## CHAPTER I

### THE PIONEERS

#### I. BEGINNINGS OF VIRGINIA

THE first permanent settlement of Englishmen on the shores of the Western continent was at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. When that little colony started forth, with high hopes of sudden wealth, but only to meet famine and disease, savage warfare, and all the desperate perils of the wilderness, the great Queen Elizabeth was already four years dead. The swift and splendid career of Shakespeare was nearly run. Spenser had passed away before the sixteenth century closed. We naturally mark that most glorious age of English literature with the names of these two unrivaled poets, just as the “Canterbury Tales” and “Piers Plowman” illuminate their generation, two hundred years earlier.

But the Elizabethan age is made not less remarkable by its men of action, especially by the great English explorers, mariners, and naval heroes. Among them the name of Raleigh is naturally associated with literature, and also with our continent. There was much noble prose, itself also shot through with golden threads of creative poetic beauty, in the Elizabethan age. Perhaps its most notable monument is Richard Hakluyt’s compilation, in three folio volumes, of “The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques,

Walter  
Raleigh,  
1552-1618

Richard  
Hakluyt,  
1552-1616.

and Discoveries of the English Nation" (1598-1600). Naturally, these voyages, from the Cabots to Raleigh himself, were chiefly westward across the Atlantic. Better than any other, these quaint and often rough records tell how Englishmen came to begin the conquest of America.

Hakluyt himself never crossed the Atlantic, Raleigh came as an explorer and adventurer only, while Captain John Smith did cast in his lot, heartily and loyally, with the colony at Jamestown. Indeed that flickering beacon of Westward progress, which lighted the way for hesitating Pilgrims and Puritans in the next decades, would probably have been extinguished as quickly and completely as its ill-fated predecessors, but for Smith's courage, foresight, experience, and indomitable energy.

Nevertheless, Captain Smith actually lived in Virginia only two years (1607-1609). He spent the twenty-two years of his later life in England, and there all his books were published; though one later voyage of discovery, to be sure (1614), bore important fruit in a map whereon first appear the names of New England and Plymouth. No one calls Robert Louis Stevenson a Samoan, or sets off from English literature any of his books published in exile. Much less can such an appropriation of British genius be attempted in the case of Captain Smith.

Yet, "A True Relation" and other works were indeed written this side the sea, in 1607-1608. The experiences here vividly set forth, the heroic qualities of Smith himself, are of vital importance in any chronicle of our national growth. Here, then, we may say, begins that gradual divergence from the

Captain  
John Smith,  
1579-1631.

poetry and prose of insular English life that leads to our national literature.

Professor Tyler, in his exhaustive and final book upon our colonial literary life, quotes from Smith, with enthusiasm, this strong and beautiful sentence, characterizing the colony in Virginia, and written there, "So then here is a place, a nurse for soldiers, a practice for mariners, a trade for merchants, a reward for the good ; and, that which is most of all, a business, most acceptable to God, to bring such poor infidels to the knowledge of God and His holy gospel." This glimpse of mingled piety and thrift is certainly a most English picture. It will remind us, too, how rarely any of these gentlemen adventurers foresaw any break, for them or their children, with English allegiance, citizenship, and interest generally. Young Englishmen came to Virginia then as they go out to India now, to return with a fortune. No families came with Smith, while in the Mayflower women and children made half the company.

When George Sandys, British traveler, scholar, and versifier, completed on the banks of the James in 1621-1624 his rhymed version of Ovid's "Metamorphoses," we may be sure he thought little of any critics nearer than London and Cambridge-on-the-Cam. He spent here only those three of his sixty-seven years. He was doubtless a homesick exile, never dreaming of an American national literature, nor indeed of an American nation. Yet for us he has an importance and interest as the first literary man who lived and wrote on this continent. Indeed, he was a very successful author ; his work passed

George  
Sandys,  
1577-1644.

through eight editions in the eighteenth century, and was a favorite, not only of the public generally, but of Pope, while Dryden betrays his jealousy by sweeping strictures. What was said above about the classic origins of our culture is curiously illustrated by this first American author, a loyal Englishman, translating, out of the original Latin, our chief extant collection of romantic Hellenic myths.

One of Captain Smith's early works is a letter to the stockholders in the London company which "promoted" the colony. From these thrifty people bitter complaints had come over, because the gold of the Indies was not promptly pouring in to pay rich returns upon their investment. The fearless captain gives a vivid idea of the hardships and grievous needs in the colony, and closes curtly, "As yet you must not look for any profitable returns." The ocean was evidently making already a rift, destined to grow wider, between these far-off pioneers and those who "held the rope."

Yet there was, apparently, a far richer cargo of unminted gold sent back, in those very first years, sent to the one of all mankind best able to give it the form that should make it tenfold more precious, and indestructible forever. In June, 1609, the flagship of a fleet carrying five hundred fresh colonists to Virginia was wrecked on one of the Bermudas. After terrible hardships they succeeded in building two rude pinnaces in which they reached Jamestown. Their lugubrious story was promptly written out, and sent to England for publication, by William Strachey, afterward governor of the colony, but of whom hardly anything else is known. He who reads this

thrilling narrative will find it difficult to reject the belief that it furnished many suggestions for Shakespeare's "Tempest." In that play, it will be recalled, occurs the one line of Shakespeare which clearly alludes to this hemisphere : —

Shake-  
speare's  
"Tempest,"  
1611.

"To fetch dew from the still-vext Bermoothes."

From Strachey also we get our first glimpse of little Pocahontas, as a hoydenish tomboy romping with the children of Jamestown.

When the trade in tobacco lifted the hard-pressed Virginian colonists so suddenly into affluence, it was still to England that they long turned for the few books of which they felt the need. Thither their sons went for higher education, social polish, or the more refined forms of dissipation. Class distinctions were deeply drawn. The wealthy planters formed a superior social clan, which was greatly enriched by the cavalier emigration while the Puritan Commonwealth ruled England. From this "tidewater aristocracy," in after years, some of the great statesmen of the Revolutionary epoch were to spring.

Almost coincident with the publishing of Cotton Mather's "Ecclesiastical History of New England," best known as the "Magnalia Christi," there appeared in London a modest, well-written book by a Virginia planter, which gives, even now, an enjoyable picture of the easy-going Southern life. Robert Beverley's "History of the Present State of Virginia" opens with a brief historical chronicle ; but the latter two thirds of the moderate-sized work he devoted to a description of the natural products, of the natives and of their life, of the actual social con-

Robert  
Beverley,  
1675-1716.

ditions then prevailing in the colony. Written to supersede an antiquated and generally untruthful chapter on Virginia in a book then recently issued, this work of Beverley's is a vigorous and highly successful defense of his own well-beloved people and land. It is the more deserving of revival and wider attention, because so little record of early life in the Southern colonies has been transmitted to us. That form of Anglo-Saxon civilization which produced almost all the leading statesmen of the Revolutionary and early constitutional periods certainly demands our fuller comprehension.

Not a few manuscripts of this long silent period may yet throw welcome light upon an important historical epoch. A typical and interesting figure is Col. William Byrd, who at his death in 1744 held 180,000 acres of land in Virginia and North Carolina. His library of 4000 volumes was doubtless the best private collection in the Southern colonies. His account of the running of the state boundary line through the Dismal Swamp, in 1727, is the most valuable of his many readable papers, now collected and well edited by J. S. Bassett.

But it is not in Virginia, nor in the South generally, that the chief intellectual currents of the seventeenth or eighteenth century run. The planter, supreme in his own domain, amusing himself with hunting, racing, gaming, or provincial politics, was rarely reminded of his own illiteracy. The clergyman was often domiciled as his chaplain, and shared his dissipations. The sturdy, ambitious, active-minded middle class, the stay of true democracies, perishes in the atmosphere of feudal slavery. Governor

William  
Byrd,  
1674-1744.

Social con-  
ditions in  
Virginia.

Berkeley in 1670 thanked God that they had "no free schools nor printing" in Virginia. Colleges and newspapers came late. In fact, even down to the time of the Civil War, at least, there were always hundreds of young Southerners in the great colleges of the Northeast. In our own day, indeed, the genial writers of Southern birth find their audience, as well as their publishers, in the North and West.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

A selection from Hakluyt's voyages has recently been edited by E. J. Payne.

Strachey's "History of Travail into Virginia Britannia," first printed by the Hakluyt Society, London, in 1849. Copious extracts from his doleful tale of shipwreck are given by Tyler, pp. 43-45, and Stedman Library, Vol. I.

The writings of Captain John Smith are now collected in one volume with valuable notes, in the edition of Arber, Birmingham, 1884, the "English Scholar's Library." See also C. D. Warner's "Captain John Smith."

Miss Mary Johnston's romances of early Virginian life can hardly be called "historical" at all. The extant letter of John Rolfe, excusing his marriage (Stedman, Vol. I, pp. 17-21), for instance, is curiously unlike the courtly and chivalric walking gentleman in "To Have and to Hold."

### SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL STUDY

The relation of Strachey's shipwreck to the scene in Shakespeare's "Tempest" is a suitable problem for direct comparative study.

The Pocahontas story is the one notable romantic chapter in our early annals. The most famous incident, her intervention to save Captain Smith's life, is mentioned first by the captain years afterward, when the "Lady Rebecca," as she was then called, was herself in England. The truthfulness of this account, and indeed of Smith's writings generally, is a question always in order. Here John Fiske's "Old Virginia and Her Neighbors" has an especially interesting defense of Smith's veracity. The champion is fearless, but his cause desperate.

The reasons for the complete absence of an early native literature in the South are well stated by Professor Tyler ("History," etc., Vol. I, pp. 80-92), and suggest a comparative study of our Puritan and Virginian civilizations.

## II. PLYMOUTH PLANTATION

It was perhaps fortunate that the first heroic settlement on the bleak shores of New England was made by a company of extreme Separatists, alienated from political attachment to England, in both State and Church, by persecution, and by the enforced exile of a dozen years in Holland. Their example and precept no doubt hastened that independence of New England generally which the distance, the necessity of self-reliance, and the stubborn self-poised Puritan nature itself rendered all but inevitable. The distinction between Pilgrim and Puritan, indeed, though real, was never radical, and faded out in the first century. The Pilgrim extremists of Plymouth colony had even learned in Leyden—not true tolerance indeed, but—a greater humanity than their Puritan neighbors. For instance, their treatment of Roger Williams and of the Quakers was comparatively gentle. Their annexation to Massachusetts in 1692 was peacefully accomplished, and turned out a politic and natural union. Hence Plymouth colony would have left little separate record in the life of New England, but for one precious book, William Bradford's history "Of Plimouth Plantation," perversely called in England, "The Log of the *Mayflower*."

William  
Bradford,  
1590-1657.

Bradford is the central figure among the Pilgrims. He was a refined gentleman, a lifelong student of

modern and ancient languages. From 1621 to his death, in 1657, he was governor of the colony, except for five years when he refused to serve. His history goes back to the origin of the Separatist movement in England, and is brought down to 1646. The narrow, heroic nature of the man, his undoubting confidence that his little folk are God's peculiar people and the sole possessors of full inspired truth, glimmer from almost every page. There is much dry theologic argument, much petty squabbling with the financial supporters of the company, here set forth at length. There is little or no artistic charm, but much dignity and pathos in simplicity. Despite the spelling, which is perverse and complicated even for that time, it is a book richly worthy of study, even in its beautiful original script. The final parting from the brethren in Delft is thus characterized, "So they left y<sup>t</sup> goodly & pleasante citie, which had been ther restingplace near 12 years ; but they knew they were pilgrimes, & looked not much on those things, but lift up their eyes to y<sup>e</sup> heavens, their dearest cuntrie, and quieted their spirits." Bradford's careful reference to "Hebrews xi" at the word "pilgrimes" was not needed to remind us, that even before King James's Version the English Bible of Wyclif and his successors had been the chief literary inspiration of Lollard, Puritan, and Separatist.

Some other works of Bradford and of his friend Winslow are extant, notably a joint diary of that terrible first year of the colony. A clear glimpse of the spiritual man, Bradford, and a final test of the literary skill possessed by this most cultivated of the Pilgrims, will be found in the verses left at his

Edward  
Winslow,  
1595-1655.

death (Stedman, Vol. I, pp. 115-116). In modern spelling, they begin :—

“From my years young in days of youth  
God did make known to me his truth,  
And call'd me from my native place  
For to enjoy the means of grace.”

Every young American may profitably learn by heart these simple, earnest, dignified lines,—thirty-four in all. But it is difficult to call a single verse of it poetry. The nearest to a picture is perhaps the couplet :—

“In fears and wants, in weal and woe,  
A pilgrim, passed I to and fro.”

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

After being freely used and almost copied by several native historians of the next generations, Bradford's manuscript history mysteriously vanished. It was rediscovered in the library of the Bishop of London, and was first printed by the Massachusetts Historical Society, from a transcript of the original, in 1856. This edition has excellent and copious notes by the late Charles Deane. A facsimile of the manuscript appeared in London, 1896, with introduction by J. A. Doyle. Finally, in 1898, the manuscript itself was restored to Massachusetts, and the sumptuous volume of the state printers gives, not only a verbatim text of the history, but a most interesting account of the circumstances under which it returned to New England. See also Tyler, Vol. I, pp. 116-126. Extracts in Stedman, Vol. I, pp. 291-303.

Charles  
Deane,  
1813-1889.

Jane (Good-  
win) Austin,  
1831-1894.

“Standish of Standish,” and other romances, by the late Mrs. Jane G. Austin, are based on a very intimate knowledge of Plymouth and its strongly conservative local traditions.

#### TOPICS FOR STUDY

The value of these grave annals of Bradford is almost wholly historical. Yet they may be profitably read in especial quest of picturesque description or poetic passages, or of information

on the social conditions. Careful students of Longfellow's "Miles Standish" will find here the plain facts set forth very differently. Similar comparisons may be made for Hawthorne's "Morton of Merry Mount," Longfellow's "Ballad of Sir Christopher" (Gardiner), etc. Bradford's account of Morton, and Morton's pungent description of the Pilgrims' dealings with himself, are both quoted by Stedman, and make capital material for a pair of theses, in defense of the two sides.

Thomas  
Morton,  
1576-1646.

### III. THE CHARACTER OF THE PURITAN

The Puritan exodus, during the years when Charles I reigned without a Parliament (1629-1640), created at once in Massachusetts a wealthy and prosperous commonwealth of fifteen thousand souls. Financially they were from the first independent; their company and its officers crossed the sea with Winthrop. The conditions this side the Atlantic made them practically Separatists in Church and State no less promptly. Few, indeed, ever looked back with longing toward England. A representative legislature was at once organized. A league with three other smaller but independent neighbor colonies, Plymouth, Connecticut, New Haven, so early as 1643, clearly foreshadowed even the present union of states, and gave to John Winthrop the prophetic and well-deserved title of President. The Civil War in England stopped this tide of immigration.

From the thirty thousand folk then in New England, it is computed that twenty million living Americans are descended. Until after our own Revolution, the North was essentially the land of the Puritan. The relatively small alien elements, such as the Dutch of New Amsterdam, the Huguenot refugees, the Scotch Presbyterians, were largely

absorbed. Even the multifarious forces that have filled the great West in later days were led and controlled by the Yankee. His successful fight for a "Free Kansas" is typical of a still larger conquest.

Persistence  
of Puritanic  
traits.

To his speech, his political and social traditions, the later immigrants have conformed, far more nearly than to any other standard. Of course, in the process, as in the fiercer struggle between two kindred types of Teutonic men in the Civil War, the victor also has been profoundly modified. Yet the fact will be generally conceded that the Puritan has been and is, on the whole, the most prominent element in our national life, and especially in our literature.

From this New England race were born, and under its traditions were bred, in the nineteenth century, nearly all the chief figures of our first great literary epoch, Bryant and Emerson, Hawthorne and Longfellow, Lowell and Holmes, Channing and Parker, Bancroft and Parkman, Webster and Phillips. To understand them at all, we must form some conception of New England life from the beginning.

Conversely, since nearly all the best literature is intensely national, we may turn confidently to these very men of a later day for the most vivid pictures of our ancestors' life. Nor are we to think merely of such historians as Parkman, Palfrey, and Fiske. Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter," and many of his shorter studies, depict that early life with the idealizing vividness of creative genius. Whittier's "Snowbound," and his quiet prose romance, "Leaves from Margaret Smith's Journal," are a reminder that the once persecuted Quaker was never a real alien at

all, in blood, speech, or moral quality. And so, though America made no important addition to the world's literature during the seventeenth century, yet the first question that awaits us is, nevertheless, What was this Puritan stock and civilization? Incidentally, we ought also to see why it was that *belles lettres* came so late in the story of their conquest over a continent.

The immigrants of 1629-1640 were in blood, culture, creed, the most homogeneous body, perhaps, that ever created a new state. In blood they were all English, the overwhelming majority Anglo-Saxon, from the East Anglian counties, or, in a less degree, from the sturdy maritime stock of Devon and its neighbor shires. (Miss Scudder makes it clear that the Saxon contributed far more to the national life, but relatively much less to imaginative literature than the Kelt and the Norman, between whom he stands.) Their clergymen had been carefully, though narrowly, educated, many being graduates, in particular, from Emmanuel College of Cambridge. The Puritan was earnestly and utterly opposed to the whole courtly literature, especially to the drama. Indeed, the unworthy and immoral successors of the great Elizabethan theaters were closed altogether, as soon as he became master in England. Even of Shakespeare's plays, it is said, not a single copy can be traced in New England for a century and more. Milton himself, the lofty but lonely poet of Puritanism, was almost equally unknown this side the sea, until long after his own time.

The splendid achievements of the organized Christian Church in Europe through a thousand years

Harvard  
College,  
1636.

were, to our forefathers, only a tale of fatal sin and error. The literatures of Greece and Rome, or of modern times so far as they then existed, were hardly less an abomination to them. They knew and loved one book: the Bible. The Harvard College they created so promptly was in no sense a center of free scientific investigation and humane culture. The Greek and Hebrew so diligently taught there was concentrated upon the exposition of the Old and New Testaments. The college was founded, indeed, to supply an educated orthodox clergy, and to convert and train to godly life the Indian youth.

The intention of the fathers was to found in the wilderness a theocratic commonwealth of the Jewish type. Full citizenship was at first accorded in most towns only to orthodox church members. Even legislative action was often forestalled, and bluntly dictated, by the preacher of the "election sermon."

These perils, however, brought their own correction. The need of common defense without and helpfulness within, even the inherent sense of fair play, soon widened the suffrage to householders of any or no faith. Real tolerance, to be sure, was rare and of slow growth, but to give men room to disagree was the land made wide. Often a whole parish pushed out to seek a new home in the wilderness. Not merely Roger Williams's colony, indeed, but many more orthodox towns had their origin in theological dissensions. The minister himself, too, was neither regarded as directly inspired nor consecrated irrevocably for life. He could be punished for crime, deposed for grievous heresy of doctrine; and the final decision as to truth or error lay with a

legislature which was, after all, not clerical or permanent, but civil, elective, and constantly changing.

The Puritanic temper was not, perhaps even now is not, a joyous one. To our fathers all pleasures and amusements were, if not in themselves sinful, always dangerous enticements from the narrow road to salvation. Even Bunyan meant to write a vivid sermon only, and never suspected how many a boy would read it, quite untroubled by the moral or the real meaning. The personified powers of evil were more actual, near, and energetic, seemingly, to the Puritan mind than the spirits of joy and gladness. Perhaps this gloomy and serious view of life is a trait of the whole Anglo-Saxon race. "Art for art's sake" is a maxim we still distrust. Under the mystical harmonies of a Poe, we demand still the larger evidence of insight, of revelation, of truth. Hawthorne is our master, not chiefly because his every sentence has his dreamy charm, but because he has most deeply explored the heart of man. The beauty in any human creation seems to us to consist largely, if not chiefly, in its evident usefulness for the education and uplifting of men.

This utilitarian quality is indeed the prevailing trait of New England literature, even down to Lowell's time. It has made the "Artist of the Beautiful" all too rare among us, and has cast suspicion even upon his most precious work when at last he has come indeed. It is of "Hosea Biglow" that his shrewdest and merriest critic, Dr. Holmes, speaks : —

"Whose play is all earnest, whose wit is the edge  
(With a beetle behind) of a sham-splitting wedge."

Other prominent traits of the early Puritan are an intense local, rather than national or world-wide, human attachment, unquestioning faith in his own social and moral standards, a lack of æsthetic delight in the fine arts, an absence of enthusiasm for music and romance, for color and form. But perhaps the most striking quality was his earnest conviction, that his neighbor's affairs were no less his own, and should be duly regulated in every particular. Still, the Calvinistic sense of individual responsibility to God leads logically at last to individual freedom in action and thought.

It is no hostile or alien critic who confesses that all these tendencies seem to have survived in large measure to our own day. Names change, but motives are essentially the same. The Abolitionist or the Mugwump no longer labors, avowedly, for the glory of God and the salvation of his neighbor's soul; but his moral conviction, and the action that springs from it, would be perfectly intelligible, certainly to Bradford, Winthrop, or Vane, perhaps even to Endicott and Dudley, could they rise from their graves to-day.

This thrifty, hard-working Puritan folk of Anglo-Saxon stock, with their narrow, joyless creed, their dread of mere pleasure and luxury or culture as enticements of the Evil One, their utter rejection of divine right for king or priest, their devout unswerving faith in the Hebrew Bible, lacked for many a year either leisure or desire for poetry and fine arts generally. Emerson says, "The necessity of clearing the forest, laying out town and street, and building every house and barn and fence, . . . made the

whole population poor." Even a Hawthorne, we remember, could shape no romance as he toiled heavily in the barnyard of Brook Farm.

Then the repeated transplanting, across the narrow and the wider seas, had left little trace of the picturesque folklore and legend that lingers yet in the old German chimney corner. Classic myth and saintly mediaeval tradition, as was said just now, were alike forbidden as things of evil. Nor did the trackless forests and strange painted folk of this New World appeal powerfully, as a rule, to their fancy. The "noble red man" has been but a murderous, yelling fiend to most border folk in each generation. Little within or without aroused the Puritan's imagination, his sense of the picturesque, excepting always the glories of the New Jerusalem. From the English Bible, indeed, history, romance, poetry, color, and music, crept unsuspected into his heart and life. But even so, creative art was long absent. The rapid sketch of literature in the first two centuries which must now be outlined is but a confession of poverty, hardly even of effort, or of conscious lack. Few left so much as copious diaries or family chronicles for the eager eyes of posterity.

A people of  
one Book.

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Palfrey's "History of New England" is still the standard authority. See John Fiske's wider treatment of the colonizing period in his "Beginnings of New England." Much curious detail as to the outward conditions of the early colonial life is collected in the attractive volumes of Alice Morse Earle.

Besides numerous artistic sketches, such as "Endicott and the Red Cross," "Maypole of Merry Mount," "The Gentle Boy," "The Gray Champion," "Legends of the Province

House," "Main Street," etc., Hawthorne wrote a brief history of New England more picturesque than many more learned works. His sense of the contrast, and yet of a certain kinship, between his Puritan forefathers and himself may be felt especially in his introduction to the "Scarlet Letter." Whittier's "Margaret Smith's Journal" has been mentioned in the text. Mrs. Child's youthful book, "Hobomok," is almost forgotten.

#### SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

The costumes, customs, daily life of the Puritans, especially as contrasted with our own, can be graphically treated by teacher or student.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

#### I. WINTHROP'S DIARY

JOHN WINTHROP, first governor of Massachusetts and first president of federated colonies in New England, is by many historical students ranked beside Washington as a father of our common country. His diary, begun on shipboard off the Isle of Wight, March 29, 1630, and continued with unflagging care until a few months before his death in 1649, is the chief storehouse of facts for the early history of the colony. The writer, a most patient, dutiful, and wise leader of men, is clearly, though quite unconsciously, revealed in this long chronicle. It has even less literary form than Bradford's history, unless its rugged simplicity be accounted the one fitting style for its homely and unpretentious materials. The drowning of his son is given one line. The death of "a cow at Plymouth and a goat at Boston, with eating Indian corn," may remind us that neighborly sympathy began early among us. Severe critics of college morals in our own day should ponder the entry for June 5, 1644: "Two of our ministers' sons, being students in the college, robbed two dwelling-houses in the night of some £15. Being found out, they were ordered by the governor of the college to be there whipped, which was per-

John  
Winthrop,  
1587-1649.

formed by the president himself — yet they were about twenty years of age ; and, after, they were brought into the court and ordered to twofold satisfaction, or to serve so long for it. We had as yet no particular punishment for burglary."

Yet, when larger questions arise, we see clearly the philosophic statesman. Embodied in the journal of the year 1645 is the best extant specimen of the grave Puritanic oratory : Winthrop's speech from the magistrate's bench, after his acquittal upon a charge of exceeding his powers as deputy governor for that year. Especially famous is his definition for the two sorts of liberty. As opposed to the moral freedom wherewith the Truth maketh us free, he describes the liberty, to do evil as well as good, which we share with beasts, and stigmatizes it, in scholarly wise, with a brief paraphrase from Terence, *Omnis sumus licentia deteriores* (We are all by license debased).

Winthrop's inner life is still better seen in the brief tract, "A Model of Christian Charity," composed, on the voyage in the *Arbella* in 1629, for the guidance of the colonists. His noble wife, Margaret, is also clearly revealed to us in their correspondence. It is interesting to note that the son, the second John Winthrop, who parted company with his father as fearlessly as that father had left home and luxury for freedom and conscience, was but a scholarly man of action ; but among their many worthy descendants there have been at least two highly gifted men of letters, Robert C. Winthrop, the biographer of the great Puritan, and Theodore Winthrop, one of the earliest and most lamented martyrs of the Civil War.

## II. THE COBBLER OF AGAWAM

Few indeed of our early books are amusing, least of all the ponderous essays in controversial theology which form the overwhelming majority among them. We can hardly pass by, then, the Reverend Nathaniel Ward of Ipswich, better known as the "Simple Cobbler of Agawam." Yet his stay in Massachusetts was a mere episode. Graduate of Emmanuel College in 1603, he was a notable scholar, traveler, and preacher when Laud's persecution drove him across the seas in 1634. Returning, he overtook the manuscript of his famous book before it was printed, in England, 1647. There is in it little of the simple cobbler, but on every page is revealed a pedant, a bigot, a pessimistic grumbler. The king is hopelessly wrong, the hundred sects that vary from his own exact shade of non-conformity are all astray, English womanhood generally is beneath contempt, above all the least toleration of laxity in doctrine, of long hair or short skirt, is the unpardonable sin.

Yet the book is delicious. The key is struck at the first word. "EITHER I am in an Appoplexie, or that man is in a Lethargie, who doth not now sensibly feele God shaking the Heavens over his head, and the Earth under his feet." He is indeed in a "Lethargie" who lays down this little masterpiece half read. Milton, almost at the same moment, is pleading with Areopagitic dignity for freedom of utterance. But bigotry finds a far more piercing voice here: "To authorize an untruth, by a Toleration of State, is to build a Sconce against the walls of Heaven, to batter God out of his Chaire." Pilate's

Nathaniel  
Ward,  
1578-1653.

doubt, “What *is* Truth?” never troubled this devout self-confidence.

The keen-bladed cobbler bitterly resents the suspicion that he writes rather “merrily than seriously. . . . I write with all the indignation I can.” Yet even the “nugiferous Gentledame,” who had followed too promptly the court fashion in dress, must have bit her lip and giggled over this raking fire of billingsgate: “I look at her as the very gizzard of a trifle, the product of a quarter of a cypher, the epitome of nothing, fitter to be kickt, if shee were of a kickable substance, than either honour’d or humour’d.”

It is evident that the grim old Jeremiah himself never smiled, save with sardonic grin. His bigotry is abominable. His wide knowledge of the classic poets only misleads him into fierce macaronic sentences, half-Latin, half-English, or the most pedantic of invented words. He has no aesthetic taste. Yet the book should be read, and cannot but be enjoyed by any earnest student of literature or critic of style. Its literary lesson is that sparkling wit can wing almost any arrow of speech. When to Puritanic fervor and satiric force was added real humane culture, artistic taste, and a worthy cause, the Cobbler found his lineal descendant in Hosea Biglow.

### III. ROGER WILLIAMS

Roger  
Williams,  
1600-1684.

Of the sermons and controversial pamphlets in theology, written by such men as Ward, and often in somewhat such temper, by far the larger part of our early “literature” consisted. It is remote indeed from the truly humane spirit. Roger Williams

himself, with all his tolerance in act, was in the thickest of the wordy fray. He would not have the Quakers persecuted by law, but he undertook to refute their heresies in fierce polemics, under such titles as "George Fox digged out of his Burrows." Yet it is inspiring to see this noble figure, pleading fearlessly for universal toleration, in a century when such conditions were actually to be found only in Holland. His final reply to Cotton should be a classic, like Milton's plea for freedom of printing. One is doubly glad to find, therefore, among Williams's two thousand printed pages, many a sentence noble in form and music as in meaning, touched even, at times, with conscious picturesqueness.

"The wilderness is a clear resemblance of the world, where greedy and furious men persecute and devour the harmless and innocent, as the wild beasts pursue and devour the hinds and roes." A quainter humor and a happier smile plays over the phrase that describes "us poor grasshoppers hopping and skipping from branch to twig in this vale of tears." His clearest single utterance, which is also nobly poetic, philosophically true and wise, is found in a letter to his people of Providence, written in 1655. He there likens a commonwealth to "many hundred souls in one ship, whose weal and woe is common. . . . The commander ought to . . . command that justice, peace, sobriety, be kept and practised." He may punish mutiny, compel personal service of all passengers in a crisis. But they should not be "forced to come to the ship's prayers, nor compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practise any." We cite the passage here, simply as an

excellent sustained simile; but it is no wonder that an age which attempted to deny, and fight against, such elemental truths found little leisure for culture and poetry.

#### IV. THE BAY PSALM BOOK

A printing press was first set up at Cambridge, in 1639. The first book printed and published in America (1640) was in verse, though not poetry. It was a translation of David's Psalms, made by the "chief divines in the country," says Cotton Mather; that is, it is the mature joint effort of our most educated men of New England in that generation. Their version is characterized fairly enough in the "Encyclopædia Britannica" as "the worst of many bad." The Preface, by Richard Mather, who was the first of the family "dynasty" of Mathers, should by all means be read. It emphasizes the "religious care and faithful endeavor to keep close to the original text." "God's altar needs not our polishings." They had heard, perhaps, Milton's command:—

"Let your silver chime  
Move in melodious time,  
And let the bass of Heav'n's deep organ blow,"

but they could not, or did not, heed such a bidding. Whether they read Milton or not, those unmelodious "divines" had before them the noble prose of the King James's Version, which should have been sacred from such torture as this:—

"But as for those that seek my soule to bring it to an end,  
They shall into the lower parts of the earth downe descend.  
By the hand of the sword also they shall be made to fall:  
And they be for a portion unto the foxes shall."

## V. ANNE BRADSTREET

"The first professional poet of New England was a woman," says Professor Tyler. The daughter of Governor Dudley, she was familiar with the best culture of both Englands. If she had set down in simple, straightforward fashion the impressions made on her by the strange new life, our debt of gratitude would be great. But even the sea is "Thetis" in her bombastic rhyme; no bird sings save "Philotel." Her poems are dreary with pedantic learning; of nature we get hardly a glimpse. It is impossible to keep awake while, for instance, the four elements debate at unbounded length their respective value to the world, or her "Four Monarchies" unroll a rhymed chronicle of all ancient history. Yet her ear for rhythm is good, her command of words all but unlimited. A few of her sincerest utterances, naturally religious, make us suspect that under due guidance she might indeed have been a singer. But instead she feels that

"These are the days the Church's foes to crush,  
To root out Popelings, head, tail, branch, and rush."

It appears to us that these stern men and women strangely missed the charm of life, without and within. Mistress Bradstreet's verses, "Longing for Heaven," seem faintly conscious of that very fact:—

"As weary pilgrim now at rest  
Hugs with delight his silent nest:  
His wasted limbs now lie full soft,  
That miry steps have trod full oft:  
Blesses himself to think upon  
His dangers past, and travails done."

Anne  
(Dudley)  
Bradstreet,  
1612-1672.

Among Mistress Bradstreet's lineal descendants was Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes.

## VI. MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH

Michael  
Wiggles-  
worth,  
1631-1705.

A dyspeptic, fragile body, an ascetic, gloomy spirit, a narrow, grawsome imagination, and a fatal fluency in ignoble forms of versification, were the equipment of the one really popular poet in early New England. His account of the last judgment in the "Day of Doom" seems to us unutterably sacrilegious. Yet it had in America a far greater sway, even into the present century, than "Paradise Lost" ever attained. How many bereft mothers' tears must have been doubly embittered, because to those that had died, sinless and unbaptized, in earliest infancy, the divine Judge declares, after fluent arguments pro and contra:—

"But unto you I shall allow  
The easiest room in Hell."

The doctrine was of course anything but new, yet Wigglesworth's thin, shrill rhymes drive it home to the heart, as Dante's calm and stately verse never could. In another poem he utters a curious and widespread belief about our continent, a belief perhaps echoed in the master's "Tempest":—

"A waste and howling wilderness,  
Where none inhabited  
But hellish fiends, and brutish men,  
That devils worshipèd."

## VII. SAMUEL SEWALL

It is a relief to set just here the portly, happy figure of Judge Sewall. His diary of over fifty years depicts a social life provincial indeed, narrower and shallower than the times of the founders; but while he courts his ancient sweethearts with sweet-meats, we get glimpses of a slowly mellowing folk, of staid merrymakings and timid luxury. His share in the witchcraft frenzy Sewall solemnly and publicly repented, and recalled, ever after, by a solitary annual fast and vigil. His brief antislavery pamphlet, "The Selling of Joseph," proclaims him the forerunner of Garrison, if not of Bellamy. Indeed there is a truer ring than Jefferson's own in his declaration, "All men, as they are the sons of Adam, are coheirs, and have equal rights unto liberty and all other outward comforts of life." Again, in another controversial pamphlet, the judge did his best to throw open heaven's gates even to women.

In this book, however, Sewall should appear, because once, in his "*Phænomena Quædam Apocalypticæ*" (1697), he was inspired to a really poetic utterance, perhaps the first on our soil. Whittier's graceful rhymes do not improve the refreshing simplicity and direct vision of the original:—

"As long as Plum Island shall faithfully keep the commanded post, notwithstanding all the hectoring words and hard blows of the proud and boisterous ocean; as long as any salmon or sturgeon shall swim in the streams of Merrimac, or any perch or pickerel in Crane Pond; as long as the sea-fowl

Samuel  
Sewall,  
1652-1730.

shall know the time of their coming, and not neglect seasonably to visit the places of their acquaintance; as long as any cattle shall be fed with the grass growing in the meadows, which do humbly bow down themselves before Turkey-Hill; as long as any sheep shall walk upon Old-Town Hills, and shall from thence pleasantly look down upon the River Parker, and the fruitful marshes lying beneath; as long as any free and harmless doves shall find a white oak or other tree within the township, to perch, or feed, or build a careless nest upon, and shall voluntarily present themselves to perform the office of gleaners after the barley-harvest; as long as Nature shall not grow old and dote, but shall constantly remember to give the rows of Indian corn their education by pairs; so long shall Christians be born there, and being first made meet, shall from thence be translated to be made partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

The judge, however, is better than his time. Theological Puritanism had grown more narrow, intolerant, and bitter since Winthrop, and the general revolt against its spiritual tyranny was inevitable. Cotton Mather's frenzied bigotry made Franklin a "free thinker."

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Winthrop's work, like Bradford's, had to wait two centuries for full publication. There is a good edition, in modernized spelling, carefully annotated, by James Savage, Boston, 1853. The best biography is by R. C. Winthrop, Boston, 1863. For the "Model of Christian Charity," see Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., VII, 31-48.

See also Tyler, Vol. I, pp. 128-136, and, for extracts, Stedman's Library, Vol. I, pp. 291-311.

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Sewall's Diary has been carefully edited by George E. Ellis, D.D., and printed by the Massachusetts Historical Society, Fifth Series, Vols. V, VI, VII. See in Henry Cabot Lodge's "Studies in History," the essay "A Puritan Pepys."

#### TOPICS FOR SPECIAL STUDY

Possibly a careful comparison of Whittier's treatment of Sewall, and of John Underhill, with the "sources" in Winthrop's diary and in Sewall's own records might be profitable. Longfellow's "New England Tragedies" may be made the basis of talks on the times. The teachers of American history and philosophy may both have a word to say on the witchcraft prosecutions.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES—(1600–1700)

## 1600–1610

American History	American Literature
1607. Foundation of Jamestown by the London Company.	
1608. Foundation of Quebec.	1608. John Smith's "True Relation of Such Occurrences and Accidents of Note as Hath Happened in Virginia."
1609. Hudson discovered Hudson River. Champlain discovered Lake Champlain. (Pilgrims settled in Leyden.)	
1610. Discovery of Hudson's Bay.	1610. William Strachey's "True Repertory of the Wrack and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates."

## 1611–1620

	1612. John Smith's Map of Virginia. Strachey's "Historie of Travaille into Virginia Britannia" written. (First published in 1849, by the Hakluyt Society.)
1613. Manhattan Island occupied by the Dutch.	
1614. John Smith explores the New England coast.	
1619. First negro slaves brought to Virginia.	1616. John Smith's "Description of New England."
1620. Settlement of Plymouth by the Pilgrims.	

## 1621–1630

	Nov. 9, 1620, to Dec. 18, 1621, "Journal of William Bradford and Edward Winslow" written. (Published as "Mourt's Relation.")
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## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES—(1600–1700)

## 1600–1610

English and European Literature	English and European History
1598–1600. Hakluyt's "Voyages." 1603. Jonson's "Sejanus."	
1605. Bacon's "Advancement of Learning."	1603. Death of Elizabeth. 1603–1625. James I. 1605. Gunpowder Plot.

## 1611–1620

1611. Chapman's translation of the "Iliad." King James's Version of the Bible. 1612. Webster's "White Devil" acted. 1613. Drayton's "Polyolbion." 1614. Raleigh's "History of the World." 1616. Shakespeare died.  1620. Bacon's "Novum Organum."	1618. Raleigh executed. Thirty Years' War began in Germany.
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## 1621–1630

1621. Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy." 1622. First English newspaper.	
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1621-1630 — *Continued*

American History	American Literature
	1621-1624. George Sandys completed in Virginia his translation of Ovid.
1623. New Amsterdam founded by the Dutch.	
1624. Virginia made a royal colony.	1624. John Smith's "General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles."
1628. Salem, Mass., founded by Endicott.	
1630. Boston founded by Winthrop.	1630. March 29, John Winthrop's Diary begun. William Bradford's "History of Plymouth Plantation" begun. John Smith's "True Travels, Adventures, and Observations."

## 1631-1640

1634. Maryland colonized.	1634. William Wood's "New England Prospect."
1635. Connecticut settled.	
1636. Foundation of Harvard College. Providence founded by Roger Williams.	
1637. Pequot War.	1637. Thomas Morton's "New England Canaan."
1638. New Haven founded.	
1639. First printing press set up in America, at Cambridge, Mass.	1639. William Pierce's Almanac, first publication printed in America.
1640. Puritan immigration ceased. Thirty thousand whites in New England.	1640. "The Bay Psalm Book," first bound volume printed in America.

## 1641-1650

1641. "The Body of Liberties" compiled by Nathaniel Ward. "A Catechism agreed upon by the Elders at the Desire of the General Court" printed in Cambridge.
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1621-1630 — *Continued*

English and European Literature	English and European History
1623. First folio of Shakespeare.	1624. Richelieu becomes master of France.
1625. Bacon's "Essays," final form.	1625. Charles I becomes King of England.
1626. Death of Bacon.	1628. French Huguenots surrender Rochelle. Petition of Right.
	1629. Charles I began his eleven years of rule without Parliament.
	1630. Gustavus Adolphus lands in Germany.

## 1631-1640

1634. "Comus" acted.	1632. Gustavus Adolphus slain at Lützen. Turning-point of Thirty Years' War.
1636. Corneille's "Le Cid."	
1637. Milton's "Lycidas."	
Death of Ben Jonson.	
	1638. Covenant in Scotland.
	1640. Long Parliament assembled.

## 1641-1650

1641. Milton published various spiritual pamphlets.	1641. Execution of Strafford.
Evelyn's Diary begun (closed, 1697).	
1642. Thomas Brown's "Religio Medici."	1642. Civil War began in England. Death of Richelieu.

1641-1650 — *Continued*

American History	American Literature
1643. "United Colonies of New England" organized under Winthrop's presidency, by Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven. Rhode Island and Maine excluded. Immigration of cavaliers into Virginia.	1643. Roger Williams's "Help to the Language of the Natives."
	1644. Roger Williams's "Bloody Tenet of Persecution."
	1646. John Cotton's "Milk for the Spiritual Nourishment of Boston Babes in Either England."
	1647. Ward's "Simple Cobbler of Agawam." Cotton's "Bloody Tenet Washed."
	1649. John Winthrop died.
	1650. Anne Bradstreet's poems printed in England as "The Tenth Muse, Lately Sprung up in America."

## 1651-1660

1656. Two Quakers, women, land at Boston.	1653. John Eliot's "Catechism in the Indian Language."
1659. Two Quakers hanged in Boston.	1655. Edward Winslow died.
1660. A Quaker woman, Mary Dyer, hanged in Boston. Sir William Berkeley in Virginia.	1657. William Bradford died.

1641-1650 — *Continued*

English and European Literature	English and European History
1642. The Puritans close the theaters.	1642. Death of Galileo.
1644. Milton's "Areopagitica."	1643. Accession of Louis XIV.
1645. Fuller's "Good Thoughts." Waller's Poems.	1645. Execution of Laud. Battle of Naseby. End of Civil War. Westminster Confession of Faith.
1647. George Fox began to preach.	1646. Charles I flees to Scotland.
1648. Herrick's "Hesperides."	1647. Scots deliver Charles I to Parliament.
1649. Lovelace's "Lucasta."	1648. End of Thirty Years' War.
1650. Baxter's "Saint's Everlasting Rest." Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living."	1649. Trial and execution of Charles I. Monarchy and House of Lords abolished.

## 1651-1660

1651. Milton's "Defensio pro Populo Anglicano."	1653. Cromwell becomes Lord High Protector.
Hobbes's "Leviathan."	
Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Dying."	
1653. Walton's "Complete Angler."	1658. Death of Oliver Cromwell.
1655. Fuller's "Church History."	
1658. Dryden's "Stanzas on the Death of Cromwell."	
1659. Molière's "Les Précieuses Ridicules."	
1660. Dryden's "Astræa Redux."	1660. Restoration of Charles II.
Pepys's Diary begun (ends 1669).	

## 1661-1670

American History	American Literature
1661. All Quakers in prison released at Charles II's orders.	1662. Michael Wigglesworth's "Day of Doom."
1663. North Carolina settled.	1663. John Eliot's Indian Bible.
1664. New Amsterdam captured by the English, and becomes New York.	
1665. New Jersey settled.	1666. John Eliot's Indian Grammar.
1669. South Carolina settled.	

## 1671-1680

1675. King Philip's War.	1673. Samuel Sewall's Diary begun.
1676. Bacon's rebellion in Virginia.	1676. Roger Williams's "George Fox digged out of his Burrows."
	1678. Later poems of Anne Bradstreet.

## 1681-1690

1681. First printing press in Virginia.	
1682. Philadelphia founded by William Penn. Delaware settled. La Salle sails down the Mississippi.	
1684. Colonial charter of Massachusetts declared void.	
1686. Sir Edmund Andros becomes royal governor of New England.	

## 1661-1670

English and European Literature	English and European History
1663. Butler's "Hudibras."	1665. Plague in London.
1667. Milton's "Paradise Lost." Dryden's "Annus Mirabilis."	1666. Great Fire in London.

## 1671-1680

1671. Milton's "Samson" and "Paradise Regained."	
1672. Boileau's "Art of Poetry."	
1673. Molière died.	
1674. Death of Milton. Death of Herrick. Racine's "Iphigénie."	
1677. Racine's "Phèdre."	
1678. "Pilgrim's Progress," Part I. George Fox's "A New Eng- land Firebrand." Dryden's "All for Love" (a rhymed version of Shake- speare's "Antony and Cleo- patra").	1679. The Habeas Corpus Act.

## 1681-1690

1681. Death of Calderon. Dryden's "Absalom."	1682. Accession of Peter the Great and Ivan. (Peter alone after 1696.)
1682. Otway's "Venice Pres- served."	1683. Executions of Russell and Sidney.
1684. "Pilgrim's Progress," Part II. Death of Corneille.	1685. Accession of James II. Rebellion and death of Mon- mouth.

1681-1690 — *Continued*

American History	American Literature
1689. King William's (Indian) War. Andros deposed and imprisoned.	1687. William Penn's "Excellent Privilege of Liberty and Property." 1689. Cotton Mather's "Memorable Providences Relating to Witchcraft and Possessions." 1690. "Public Occurrences," first newspaper in New England.

## 1691-1700

1692. Annexation of Plymouth to Massachusetts. Royal charter. Prosecutions for witchcraft in Salem, Mass. Charter of William and Mary College, Va.	1691. Increase Mather's "The Revolution in New England Justified." Cotton Mather's "Heresies, Blasphemies, and Delusions of Quakerism." The New England Primer. 1692. Increase Mather's "A Further Account of New England Witches."
	1693. Cotton Mather's "Wonders of the Invisible World." 1694. Cotton Mather's "Short History of New England." 1697. Samuel Sewall's "Phænomena Quædam Apocalyptic."
	1700. Samuel Sewall's "Selling of Joseph." (First antislavery tract.)

1681-1690 — *Continued*

English and European Literature	English and European History
1687. Newton's "Principia." Dryden's "The Hind and the Panther." Prior, "Country Mouse and City Mouse."	1685. Edict of Nantes revoked. 700,000 Huguenots driven out of France.
1690. Locke's "Essay Concerning the Human Understanding."	1689. Accession of William and Mary. 1690. Battle of the Boyne.

## 1691-1700

1693. Locke on Education.	1694. Bank of England created. Death of Queen Mary.
1696. Tate and Brady's Psalms.	
1697. Dryden's "Virgil's Æneid."	
1700. Death of Dryden.	

## CHAPTER III

### THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

EVEN in England, there is little, indeed, of purely imaginative and poetic creation, between Milton's death and the appearance of Wordsworth's and Coleridge's "Lyrical Ballads" in 1798. We need not be lost in wonder, then, that little or no literature was created by a small, scattered English folk during the long, heroic struggle, first with the French and Indians, then with their own kin, the future "masters of the seven seas": a struggle for firm and free foothold upon a continent still unexplored and semihostile. Indeed, the second century of our history is more unpoetic even than the first, and our real national literature, if literature is indeed one of the fine arts, hardly begins until 1821,—just two hundred years after that first coy spring dawned upon the decimated but unbroken pioneers of Plymouth. But the eighteenth century is of course epochal in the story of our people, and of human progress toward civic and religious freedom.

#### I. COTTON MATHER

Cotton  
Mather,  
1663-1728.

Like a stranded leviathan across our path lies the "Magnalia Christi Americana," or ecclesiastical history of New England. This is an attempt to prove that the constant occurrence of miracles has attended

and guided the development of the Hebraic and Puritan commonwealth in America. On those who neglect church worship altogether, and quite as much upon Baptists, Quakers, and all the other pestilent schismatics, signal judgments of Heaven fall, in Mather's chronicle, thicker than angry Apollo's arrows in the "Iliad." The display of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, the world-wide allusions and digressions, prove the precocious and pedantic learning of the tireless young author, who lived to produce over three hundred and eighty separate works. His style is simply unendurable. As Professor Tyler well says, "His most common thought had to force its way into utterance through dense hedges and jungles of quotations." Though Mather calls Aristotle a "muddy-headed pagan," and Herodotus a "mercenary villain," he himself ill deserves even the humblest place among historians or philosophers. He can hardly even be called a seeker for Truth, since his personal vanity, his partisan zeal, or his theological intolerance would always close his eyes to her.

The unwieldy form of the "Magnalia" can serve here only as a warning, once impressive, but now fast passing to oblivion. Indeed, Cotton Mather's name is important largely as a reminder how entirely the political "dynasty" of reverend Mathers, and of the clergy generally, has fallen. Cotton Mather succeeded his father, Increase, only as preacher. The presidency of Harvard College he never attained, and the political sway of the clergy was even then visibly waning. The deposition of Increase Mather from the college presidency, in 1701, marks the turn of the tide. In 1689 the new charter of Massachu-

Increase  
Mather,  
1639-1723.

setts had given full political rights to property holders, whether church members or not. The common perils of the eighteenth century taught nearly all Americans to welcome a brotherhood far wider than any one theologic creed, or than any one colonial border line. Both Mathers, before they died, saw and condemned the first signs of the new time.

## II. JONATHAN EDWARDS

Jonathan  
Edwards,  
1703-1758.

Edwards, though the most noted preacher of his day, apparently never attempted to exert any influence upon the political life of his times. He filled the positions of tutor in Yale College, of minister to the Congregational Church in Northampton from 1727 until his deposition in 1750, and of missionary to an Indian tribe, 1751-1758. A few weeks before his death he had undertaken the presidency of Princeton College.

His permanent fame is as a theologian and metaphysician. He had perhaps the most acute and precocious mind ever known in America. Born of the best Puritan stock, the only son of an able and cultivated clergyman, he made astonishing progress and many far-reaching discoveries, in various physical sciences. A paper on the habits of spiders, written in his twelfth year, is worthy of an Agassiz. In mathematics and languages he was no less proficient. All his life he was an unwearying student, averaging thirteen hours of hard work in each twenty-four. He had an extremely keen wit and a mercilessly vivid imagination. In a favorable environment he might have been a great creative writer, of serene and opti-

mistic temper, ministering richly to human happiness and interpreting afresh the beauty of life.

Instead, all his mighty powers of voice and pen were devoted, after a brief and pathetic struggle, to setting forth the utter depravity of the human will, the righteous wrath of the Creator, the tortures of a hell that yawns for nearly the entire human race. This life is to him only a most brief and painful trial of the soul, after which there can be no appeal from an eternal sentence. All enjoyment is unspeakably dangerous, because it diverts man from the one important task, the saving of his lost, his hundred-fold forfeited soul.

The splendid natural capacity of Edwards, his lifelong ascetic devotion to his duty as he conceived it, the lurid terrors of his sermons, over which men still shudder,—all this makes him a most instructive figure in his century. To such men *belles lettres* were, of course, a snare of Satan. And yet Edwards himself is often witty, picturesque, even graceful, always clear, direct, and logical. Some of his sentences on Idealism, for instance, might easily be inserted in Emerson's essay on the "Transcendentalist." "The universe . . . exists nowhere but in the Divine mind. . . . Spirits only are properly substance. All material existence is only idea." Indeed, of the two philosophers, Edwards and Emerson, Edwards living in the same generation might well have been the greater, even in pure literature, through the constructive and logical powers of his tireless mind. With all his saintliness, devotion, and heroic character, his life must seem to us now largely a pathetic waste of energy; yet "Edwards on the Will" is one

of the great landmarks of psychological and theological speculation, and some wise men still speak of this modest provincial recluse as the mightiest intellect of his generation.

### III. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Benjamin  
Franklin,  
1706-1790.

Every great man bears the impress of his time ; and also sets his own stamp in turn upon that age, or the next. Perhaps of no man who lived in the eighteenth century is this truer than of Franklin. Though not, in England, an age of great creative literature, it was an epoch of swift emancipation for the human mind. Pope and Bolingbroke at its beginning prove themselves of the same century as Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin, Rousseau and Voltaire. England had recovered from the riotous levity of the Stuart Restoration, but never resumed the broken yoke of Puritanism. The rights of man were proclaimed louder than aught else. In particular, the right to enjoy this life is insisted on more strenuously than any casual hope of being elsewhere blest.

Puritanism had been more fully intrenched in the new England than in the old. Yet the narrow fanaticism of the founders could not abide unaltered. We have seen the embittered and disappointed Mathers denouncing the growing liberalism of Church and State. The fall of Edwards was more striking, especially as he had led in that famous revival of religious excitement called the "Great Awakening." He too was despondent over the universal "laxity." It was true that even the granitic nature of hereditary Puritanism was being slowly

infiltrated and softened by the showers and sunshine of a less austere time.

But the walls of Zion had been builded quite too narrow for the great republic that should be. The Baptist in Rhode Island, the Quaker in Pennsylvania, could hardly borrow, if they would, the intolerance of their persecutors. English, Irish, Scotch, Huguenots, Dutch, Germans, Swedes, and men of still other races, were comrades in the two great struggles,—against France and later against the mother country herself,—and often were interlocked also by marriage ties. As the Frenchman Crèvecoeur so well says, even in his idyllic picture of life before the Revolution, “Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world.” Steadily men’s thoughts turned more and more to a federated continental state.

Elements of  
national  
life.

In this molding of a new race and nation the part of Franklin is at least as large as any man’s. It was as a whole a race apter for action than for dreaming. His welcome gifts to it include stoves, lightning rods, police, a postal system, fire companies, as well as foreign alliances, the first libraries and magazines, a university,—and a noble model of simple, picturesque Saxon style.

“Otherworldliness” never really died out, least of all in the true “Brahmin stock,” as Dr. Holmes calls it, of the cultivated Puritans. Transcendentalism teaches, no less strenuously than Calvinism, that the visible tangible world is unreal, or at least unknowable, that only ideas are truly alive, that the universe itself exists only in the divine mind. But between

Edwards and Emerson there was an epoch of extremely practical and materialistic tendencies. The type of Yankee, of American, then developed, is still familiar, if not dominant, at home, and the only one generally accepted abroad. Kipling's "American" is offensively realistic. Shrewd, thrifty, tireless, masterful among his rivals, though half-contemptuously generous to helpless men, he enjoys the goods of this life in his own busy, hurrying fashion, and worries himself little as to things invisible and metaphysical. And to this day "success in life" is preached as a duty largely in the very words of "Poor Richard," and is best illustrated by the career of the humble printer's apprentice who at last, wealthy, learned, of world-wide fame,

"Wrested the lightning from the sky and the scepter from tyrants."

Some of our debts to Franklin we can only realize when we know our poverty before. The town of Boston from which he fled at seventeen had less than twenty thousand inhabitants, no library save in private houses, no bookstore, no newspaper worthy of the name, though the boy Franklin had already made notable progress in creating one. Philadelphia and New York were even smaller and less intellectual. Indeed, the former city undoubtedly owed much of its swift growth later in the century to this runaway Yankee.

In Philadelphia, Franklin persuaded a circle of young men to form a debating club, then to bring each his few books into a common store; and, finally, when this plan failed, he induced a larger circle to

"Thrift,  
thrift,  
Horatio."

subscribe a small sum yearly. This example, widely imitated, created the "subscription" libraries, and made us a nation of readers, as Franklin quietly claims, in his time.

Yet nearly all books worthy of the name had still to be imported. For twenty-five years (1733-1758) Poor Richard's Almanac was, for thousands of homes, the only thing approaching to literature that entered in. Though tinged with the light wit and easy grace of the *Spectator*, yet the brief introductions, anecdotes, maxims, bits of verse, here strewn with so ready a hand, contain little of creative or artistic value. Often the writer is rather coarse. In particular, Franklin had little or no chivalric feeling toward women, and a lower moral tone in his relations with them than in any other dealings. Perhaps he was also too frank, fearless, and self-satisfied to pretend to a higher virtue than he practiced.

The chief lesson, however, of Poor Richard is *thrift*. This was fully illustrated in the famous address of "Father Abraham," which in the closing number skillfully and wittily summed up the maxims and bits of advice already invented, or gathered from all sources, and uttered during the previous quarter-century. That "'tis hard for an empty bag to stand upright" is the keynote, reiterated almost like Iago's "Put money in thy purse."

Franklin's "Autobiography" is one of the favorite books of mankind. Though written chiefly in old age, and not published until long after his death, it covers only his life down to 1757. The forcible, sententious style, the quiet humor, the very human self-satisfaction of Franklin, give these pages an

unfailing charm. The little book has great value as a truthful picture of our crude social conditions. But its world-wide popularity is due rather to the complete delineation of one sturdy, happy character, of one typical life.

All Franklin's writings are vigorous, witty, healthful in their very sincerity, and instructive. They belong chiefly to our political history, or to science, though Mr. Bigelow, who rescued the simpler, genuine text of the biography from oblivion, has earned our double gratitude by weaving the philosopher's letters also into a complete self-told life. Perhaps the first place, as literature, among Franklin's lesser works, should be given to three satirical essays : "Rules for Reducing a Great Empire to a Small One," "An Edict of the King of Prussia" (both 1773), and the pretended letter of instructions to the Hessian commander in America (1777). Especially, the notion that the claims asserted over us by George III for the "mother country" could be turned upon England herself, by the yet more imperious tyrant Frederick, in the name of the elder German Vaterland, was a master stroke of satiric genius. Printed casually in a London newspaper, it made a great hit even in a hostile England.

Franklin spent so many of his latter years in England and France, educating European opinion concerning us, that he seems to have come home barely often and remained long enough to sign the great Declaration and the Constitution. But for the alliances, loans, supplies, and finally fleets and armies, won for us by Franklin's diplomacy, Washington would almost certainly have failed at last. This

foreign residence, too, was a great service to American letters and higher life generally. Through him our nation was known and respected all over Europe, even before independence was actually won.

Franklin was anything but saintly. Idealism is almost lacking in him. Even his religion is little more than an enlightened selfishness, founded on a moral code so vulnerable that his list of rules for virtuous behavior is never reprinted entire. Yet the parallel between him and Socrates is not wholly fanciful. The likeness goes much deeper than that homely style, quaint, witty illustration, and mock humility in discussion, which the modern philosopher learned largely from the ancient. Franklin is actually, thus far, for good and ill, the chief ethical teacher and molder of our race. The flight of the poor apprentice from Boston really typifies the breaking forth of a sturdy young nation from the outgrown shell of Puritanism. His public life is one of the chief chapters in our national history, and so could hardly be touched upon here.

#### IV. REVOLUTIONARY LITERATURE

The struggle for independence is often said to have opened with James Otis's fearless protest, in 1761, against the writs of assistance, that is, against the right of royal officers to invade private houses by summary violence. Even in the brief notes preserved by the youthful John Adams, who was present, we hear the ringing warning, that such acts have "cost one king of England his head, and another his throne." But the eloquence of Otis,

James Otis,  
1725-1783.

John  
Adams,  
1735-1826.

Samuel  
Adams,  
1722-1803.  
Patrick  
Henry,  
1736-1799.

Sam Adams, Patrick Henry, and their associates, is now little more than a tradition. Indeed, oratory is largely dependent on the occasion and the setting, and so is, at best, very imperfectly preserved in the written letter; and for our own Revolutionary eloquence we rarely have even that record.

The power of the newspaper increased greatly during the years before the final appeal to arms. But the magazine of our day did not exist. Instead, pamphlets were issued singly, and often exerted a decisive influence. It is interesting to note that the electric word which suddenly ended the persistent talk of loyalty to England, and proclaimed full independence as the goal of all patriots, was uttered by an erratic alien. "Tom" Paine, then, at forty years, a needy, obscure adventurer, sent over by Franklin with letters of introduction, had not been two years in America when he issued, January 1, 1776, the pamphlet "*Common Sense*." Universally read in camp and cottage, its coarse vigor had universal and decisive effect. Again, in the darkest days of war, Paine's irregular periodical called the *Crisis* brought comfort to every patriot soldier from Washington down, and still lives in its first words, "These are the times that try men's souls."

Paine's later entanglement with the French revolutionists may remind us how closely connected, yet how diverse, were the two great upheavals. In both cases the instinct of the radical agitator led Paine with unerring promptness to the scene. In America he won honor, wide audience, general gratitude. In Paris he escaped the guillotine only by a providential accident.

Thomas  
Paine,  
1737-1809.

The most widely read and influential essay that ever was written, perhaps, came from the pen of Thomas Jefferson in the summer of 1776. The "Declaration of Independence" was indeed warmly debated, criticized, and pruned, in committee and in general debate. It was issued as the manifesto of a young nation. Yet it *is* an essay of Jefferson's, as well. Its ringing assertions of human freedom and equality came rather strangely from an owner of slaves, yet many men believe that those very phrases, vibrating through three generations, the most familiar of household words, made emancipation necessary at last. Indeed, their clear tones have by no means died away, and may yet lead other generations to higher ideals of liberty. "New occasions teach new duties," but the old watchwords keep their power.

Thomas  
Jefferson,  
1743-1826.

Among the first and severest critics of the famous Declaration was Governor Hutchinson, the historian of Massachusetts, then already living in England. The outrageous sacking of his house and destruction of his papers by a Boston mob had added a burning sense of personal injury to the ordinary bitterness of civil war. The example of Hutchinson may serve to remind us how severe were the losses to our literature, and culture generally, through the vindictive persecution and lasting exile of the "Tories," many thousands of whom were permanently expelled after the strife was over, when the brains and hands of all would have been helpful to the young nation.

Thomas  
Hutchinson  
1711-1780.

The able essays of the *Federalist*, supporting and elucidating the new Constitution, are almost as distinct from general literature as is a technical law book

Alexander  
Hamilton,  
1757-1804.  
James  
Madison,  
1751-1836.  
John Jay,  
1745-1829.

George  
Washing-  
ton,  
1732-1799.

or learned treatise of any sort. Their value lies almost wholly in their matter; the only charm of style demanded for them is clearness in exposition. Yet these eighty-five essays of Hamilton, Madison, and Jay show most adequately the dignity, statesmanship, and philosophic wisdom of the Federalist leaders, who then succeeded in establishing a strong and lasting central authority in the stead of thirteen scattered, distracted, and jealous state governments. Indeed, Hamilton's untiring pen and his restless eloquence, in the very same days, in the debates of the New York Convention, may well have saved the young Constitution itself.

Perhaps, however, the literature of the Revolutionary epoch may be said to close rather with Washington's "Farewell Address" (1796). In this the wisdom and courage of our heroic leader in war and peace find worthy expression. Its calm dignity breathes the very spirit of the man. It is a far cry indeed from the "Magnalia" to this utterance of the same century. We feel, as in the case of Jefferson, a certain reverence for the ancient régime itself, that had bred in the old dominion such natural leaders of men. We almost wonder that Jefferson should have hastened home from the first continental congress to introduce in Virginia the democratic political conditions whose results he had seen in Massachusetts.

Yet even Washington's best sentences, compared with, *e.g.*, such a highly artistic and beautiful utterance as Lincoln's Gettysburg speech, seem stilted, cold, almost prosy. They become literature, if at all, largely because of the weight of character behind them, and from the dramatic conditions of the hour.

This may perhaps be said no less of almost any American utterance throughout those heroic years. The elder Adams's diary is important among the historian's "sources." Jefferson's autobiography deserves to be generally read, and the lack of any such frank self-utterance from Washington is to be deeply regretted. But Franklin, alone, has left a life history which is also a masterpiece of literature.

## V. ADDENDA

Two works of this period may require brief separate mention, though neither author was exactly an American. John Woolman's "Journal" was published after his death, at fifty-two, in 1772. This meek and fearless English Quaker seems quite unaware how heroic his life story is. Like that life, the book itself is very largely a calm, earnest protest against human slavery, particularly in this country. Mr. Whittier, in editing it, calls fitting attention to the proud and unique record of the Friends on this question. The quiet methods by which the Quakers early purged their own sect of ownership in human flesh are quaintly set forth by Woolman. The Journal is also precious as the story of an absolutely simple, sincere mystic, who heard and obeyed a personal call from God to a most dangerous life task. To such men as the elder Channing, Charles Lamb, Crabb Robinson, and Whittier himself, this simple little volume has been a lifelong inspiration.

Crèvecoeur's "Letters of an American Farmer" has been quoted already. The real author was a French immigrant, an open-eyed student of nature

John  
Woolman,  
1720-1772.

Jean Hector  
Saint-John  
de Crève-  
coeur,  
1731-1813.

and human life. His account of our early self-taught botanist, John Bartram, is excellent. The story of the poor Hebridean laborer, who in America soon becomes a prosperous farmer, is largely typical, and was clearly so intended. The sketch of slavery is terribly vivid, while happy Nantucket is drawn in striking contrast. In the last letter the horrors of the Revolution have convulsed the peaceful scene, and the farmer is about to take refuge — among the Indians! These chapters fail to give the effect of genuine letters to a brother Englishman, but they do make a naïve, humane, enjoyable, and instructive book, which should by all means be reprinted. Indeed, the entire absence of such works as Paine's, Crèvecoeur's, and Beverley's from our libraries and book markets is a grave blot on our intelligent national patriotism.

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For nearly the whole eighteenth century we have still the exhaustive works of Professor Tyler. On Mather, see A. P. Marvin's "Life and Times of Cotton Mather," Boston, 1892, and Barrett Wendell's "Cotton Mather, the Puritan Priest." The "Magnalia" was last reprinted, Hartford, 1853.

Perhaps the most accessible form of Jonathan Edwards's works is Bohn's English edition, with portrait. Biography by A. V. G. Allen, Boston, 1889. The best essays on him are by Dr. Holmes, Vol. VIII of his collected works, and Leslie Stephen, "Hours in a Library," Series 2, Chap. II. See also a more filial view in "Jonathan Edwards, a Memorial," Houghton, 1901. This volume is made up of addresses on the anniversary of Edwards's deposition at Northampton.

Franklin's "Autobiography" alone is published in the handy series of "Knickerbocker Nuggets," with brief notes by Bigelow. A companion volume, well edited by P. L. Ford, gives all of "Poor Richard" which has any literary interest. The

larger autobiography, completed from Franklin's letters, is also edited by Mr. Bigelow, Philadelphia, 1875, and he, too, is the editor of the "Works," in ten volumes, New York, 1887-1888. Lives of Franklin are included in the well-known series of "American Statesmen" and "American Men of Letters," and more recent biographies by Ford and Fisher are widely read. Franklin's own account is still the best.

For Crèvecoeur we can refer at present only to extracts and discussions in Tyler, "Literary History of the Revolution," Vol. II, pp. 347-358, and Stedman's Library, Vol. III, pp. 138-146.

Woolman's "Journal" has been often reprinted. Whittier's edition, Boston, 1871, is the best.

#### TOPICS FOR SPECIAL STUDY

Franklin's "Autobiography" should be in every school library. His first journey from Boston to Philadelphia can be effectively compared with present conditions. So may the general social life in both cities, and, in particular, the publishing trade. His project for a universal creed and church, and his personal relations with the clergy, indeed, almost any side of his life, may be profitably discussed. American humor begins with him, unless we go back to the Cobbler of Agawam.

It is unfortunate that Crèvecoeur's book is not equally accessible.

Any special treatment of Edwards should include his happy early utterances, such as his paper on spiders and his rhapsody upon the future Mrs. Edwards. Mature students, and they alone, should study at least his most famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," if only as a masterpiece of terribly realistic imagination.

## CHAPTER IV

### BEGINNINGS OF ROMANCE AND POETRY

THE heroic struggle for freedom called the American Revolution was, after all, a civil war. It gave a lasting stimulus to our political energy and oratory, but to little else. Its long resulting hatred cut us off in large degree from our nearest kin and natural allies. The expulsion of the Tories weakened the young nation still more. Provincial jealousies, and real diversity in social or political ideals, divided the long thin line of little seaboard states. True national feeling was of slow growth. Luxury, or even leisure, was hardly known. The unwearying westward march to the conquest of a continent was but just begun. The revolution to be wrought by steam and electricity was as yet not dreamed of. It was still a time of humble and painful beginnings. A national literature was at best a far-away dream of the few, in a workaday world.

One real minor poet did appear for a moment in the very years of the Revolution. Philip Freneau published verses when a boy in college. His "British Prison Ship" and many other fierce utterances have a place in the records of the war. Of the patriots who perished at Eutaw Springs he sang clearly and heroically :—

"They saw their injured country's woe,  
The flaming town, the wasted field,

Philip  
Freneau,  
1752-1832.

Then rushed to meet the insulting foe;  
They took the spear—but left the shield."

Walter Scott expressed his admiration for Freneau both directly, and also by borrowing this last verse, which may be seen gleaming intact on a page of "Marmion." Curiously enough, Campbell, in "O'Connor's Child," has paid the same compliment to the closing verse in a quatrain from the "Indian Burying Ground": —

"The hunter still the deer pursues,  
The hunter and the deer, a shade."

Both were nuggets of pure gold, well worth the lifting. "To a Honeybee" and "The Wild Honeysuckle," also, are not unworthy of Herrick's happiest vein. But political strife filled most of Freneau's career as an author, which closed altogether with the eighteenth century.

Patriotism should surely carry us all through the pages in Mr. Stedman's "Library" (Vol. III, 339-361), devoted to the anonymous lyrics of war time, beginning with "Yankee Doodle" and ending with "Bold Hathorne"—ancestor, by the way, of our greatest romancer.

The chief poem of the revolutionary decade is perhaps Trumbull's "M-Fingal" (composed 1774-1782), which satirizes in Hudibrastic verse the detested "Tory." It certainly has a rough vigor and pungent humor. When the tar is applied to the poor wretch, we are assured that

"With less profusion once was spread  
Oil on the Jewish monarch's head,  
That down his beard and vestments ran,  
And covered all his outward man."

John  
Trumbull,  
1750-1831.

The Scriptural allusion is a true Puritanic touch. We cannot deny the musical and whimsical grace wherewith

“From nose and chin’s remotest end  
The tarry icicles descend.”

The feather-bag, presently produced, brings with it mocking allusions to Mercury’s winged cap, and to Plato’s definition of man as a featherless biped. This is not, indeed, poetry in any high sense; but classic culture, wit, and ease in turning verses are at least fresh and encouraging signs for the coming time.

Joel Barlow,  
**1754-1812.**

Far more pretentious is the utterance of Joel Barlow. His “*Vision of Columbus*” (1787) as enlarged to the “*Columbiad*” (1807) became an epic of seven thousand reverberating lines. In plan it challenges comparison with the sixth book of the “*Aeneid*,” where Anchises shows his son the long array of future Romans. Even so the Genoese mariner beholds

“Macdougal, Clinton, guardians of the state,  
Stretch the nerved arm to pierce the depth of fate,”

or

“Moultrie and Sumpter lead their banded powers.”

Yet an ungrateful later age not only refuses to read

“Virgilian Barlow’s tuneful lines,”

but will not even reprint them! His “*Hasty Pudding*,” lightened with copious woodcuts, reappears in an old *Harper’s Magazine* (1856), but no poetic verse is quotable. Even the humor is heavy and lumbering. The best couplet is, perhaps: —

"E'en in thy native regions how I blush  
To hear the Pennsylvanians call thee *Mush!*"

The life of Barlow, a valorous, if bewildered, paladin of democracy, is much more interesting than his verse.

As to the rest of the forgotten group who, with Trumbull and Barlow, made up, about the turning of the century, the circle of "Hartford wits," we must again refer to Mr. Stedman. The central figure among them is perhaps the great president of Yale, Timothy Dwight. That he whose "Theology explained and defended in 173 Sermons" has passed through one hundred and twenty editions should have descended to verse at all, even to satirize with stanch conservatism "The Triumph of Infidelity," *i.e.* the growing liberalism of the extreme East, is in itself remarkable. Long before, when a young chaplain in the Continental army, he had sung, "Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise."

Timothy  
Dwight,  
1752-1817.

Charles Brockden Brown is said to have been the first man in America who made letters his profession and livelihood. He is also our first romancer. His short life was, like Louis Stevenson's, an unceasing struggle with illness. He had "never been free from pain," he wrote when near his end, "a half-hour at a time." He was always a diligent, omnivorous student, a man of high professional ideals, and presumably of blameless character. He died in the midst of the last among several brave attempts to establish a literary periodical in New York or Philadelphia.

Charles  
Brockden  
Brown,  
1781-1810.

These all seem to be valid claims upon our respect-

ful interest. Curiously enough, too, Brown announces himself as a reformer and realist in fiction, and ridicules the "Gothic castles" and gloomy mysteries of earlier romance. But his six long stories, all hastily written and published between 1798 and 1801, ill deserve the rich vellum and luxurious type in which they still appear. Instead of the fresh vigor and joy of youth, we have here a stale copy after a morbid and grawsome school of English decadents. Godwin's grawsome "*Caleb Williams*" is Brown's ideal of unapproachable excellency. Brown's own hazy characters, loosely strung plots, lurid horrors in incident, and occasional brutal coarseness, above all his verbose, grandiloquent style, make his books unreadable, and utterly unprofitable if read. His scenery is American; a few passages like the description of lawlessness during the plague of yellow fever show close realistic detail; Constantia Dudley purchasing corn meal at 80 cents a bushel, and supporting her family for three mouths on *polenta* at a cost of \$2.75, is a curious link of connection with the "Hasty Pudding" of "Virgilian Barlow," as Alsop, a yet obscurer man of letters, fondly called his epic friend. But Brown is really powerful only in exciting an uncanny sense of aimless horror. In short, he is, as Professor Wendell says, a striking reminder that our literature never had any happy youthtime. Brown knew a bad tradition in English romance too well, and real life, or the Vicar of Wakefield, it would seem, hardly at all. We turn eagerly away to a sunnier nature and a happier life.

Richard  
Alsop,  
1761-1815.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Most of the books mentioned in this section are out of print, and a general reference to the Stedman's Library must suffice. See also Tyler, and the remarkable sketch of America in 1800 which opens Henry Adams's history of America.

We might mention here such romances, depicting the Revolutionary period, as Mrs. Child's "Rebels," Miss Sedgwick's "Linwood," Kennedy's "Horseshoe Robinson," Cooper's "Pilot" and "Spy," Simms's "Partisan," and Dr. Mitchell's "Hugh Wynne."

Freneau's Revolutionary poems were last printed in America in 1865, edited by Duyckinck, New York. An exhaustive life by Mary S. Austin has just appeared (A. Wessels & Co.). See Eggleston's American War Ballads and Lyrics.

Trumbull's "M-Fingal" was edited, with notes, etc., by B. J. Lossing, New York, 1880.

Barlow's "Hasty Pudding" is cited entire by Stedman.

The "Columbiad" is out of print. Original edition, Philadelphia, 1807. For both Dwight and Barlow, see in general Professor Tyler's "Three Men of Letters," New York, 1895.

A pathetic proof of our lack of real poetry before Bryant's day will be found in his courteous and hopeful essay on contemporary verse, written in 1818. Not one of the poets there discussed is now read, or even named.

For the "Hartford wits" generally, see Sheldon's "The Pleiades of Connecticut," Atlantic Monthly, Vol. XV.

Brockden Brown's novels, six volumes, Philadelphia, 1857 and 1887. Biographies by Dunlap, Philadelphia, 1815, and by Prescott, in Sparks's "Library of American Biography" or Prescott's own *Miscellanies*. Colonel Higginson has made a much more favorable estimate of Brown, in G. R. Carpenter's "American Prose."

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES—(1700–1800)

1700–1710	
American History	American Literature
1701. French built a fort at Detroit. Foundation of Yale College.	
1701–1714. Queen Anne's War.	
	1702. Cotton Mather's "Magnalia Christi Americana." Increase Mather's "Ichabod."
	1704. April 24, first issue of the <i>Boston Newsletter</i> .
	1705. Robert Beverley's "History of Virginia." (Published in London.)

  

1711–1720	
American History	American Literature
	1714. Cotton Mather's "Duodecennial Luctuosum" ( <i>i.e.</i> History of Indian Wars 1702–1714).
	1716. Thomas Church's "Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War."

  

1721–1730	
American History	American Literature
	1721. James Franklin publishes the <i>New England Courant</i> .
	1722. Benjamin Franklin (æt. 16) contributes to his brother's paper.
	1723. Death of Increase Mather.
	1725. <i>New York Gazette</i> , first newspaper in New York.
	1728. Death of Cotton Mather.
	1729. Franklin's "Essay on Paper Currency."
1730. Printing press in Charleston.	

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES—(1700–1800)

## 1700–1710

English and European Literature	English and European History
1701. Steele's "Christian Hero."	1701–1711. Career of Marlborough.
1704. Sir Isaac Newton's "Optics."	1701–1714. War of the Spanish Succession.
1709. Copyright Act. <i>Courant</i> , first daily newspaper.	1702. Accession of Queen Anne.
1709–1711. Steele and Addison issue <i>The Tatler</i> .	1707. Union of Scotland and England as "Great Britain."
1709. Pope's Pastorals.	

## 1711–1720

1711–1712 and 1714. The <i>Spectator</i> .	1714. Accession of George I.
1711. Pope's "Essay on Criticism."	
1712–1714. Pope's "Rape of the Lock."	
1715. <i>Le Sage's "Gil Blas,"</i>	
1715–1720. Pope's "Iliad."	
1719–1720. Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe."	1720. Failure of the South Sea Company.

## 1721–1730

1723. Voltaire's "Henriade."	1727. Accession of George II.
1723–1725. Pope's "Odyssey."	
1725–1730. Thomson's "Seasons."	
1726. Swift's "Gulliver."	
1727. Gay's "Beggars' Opera."	
Pope's "Dunciad."	
1729. Law's "Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life."	
Pope's "Dunciad."	

**1731-1740**

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**American History**

1733. Georgia settled.

**American Literature**

- 1731. Franklin projected the Philadelphia Library.
- 1733-1758. Franklin issues Poor Richard's Almanac.
- 1734. Jonathan Edwards's "Divine Light."
- 1735. Franklin's "Essay on Human Vanity."
- 1736. Thomas Prince's "Chronological History of New England."
- 1740. Read's Latin Grammar.
- 1740. Whitefield's Sermons.

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**1741-1750**

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- 1743. American Philosophical Society founded by Franklin.
- 1745. Capture of Louisburg by Pepperell.

1749. University of Pennsylvania founded by Franklin.

- 1741. Jonathan Edwards's "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God."
- 1742. Edwards's "Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England."

- 1746. Franklin, "On Courtship and Marriage."
- 1750. Franklin, "On Thunder Gusts."

## 1731-1740

English and European Literature	English and European History
1732. Pope's "Essay on Man."	
1735. Linnæus's "Systema Naturæ."	
1736. Butler's "Analogy."	
1737. Shenstone's "Schoolmistress."	
1738. Johnson's "London."	
1739. Hume's "Treatise on Human Nature."	
1740. Richardson's "Pamela."	

## 1741-1750

1741-1742. Hume's "Essays."	1741. Coronation of Maria Theresa.
1742-1745. Young's "Night Thoughts."	
1744. Akenside's "Pleasures of the Imagination."	1745. Last Jacobite Rebellion. "Young Pretender" in England.
1746. Collins's "Odes."	
1747. Gray, "On Distant Prospect of Eton." Prospectus of Johnson's Dictionary.	
Klopstock's "Messiah."	
1748. Richardson's "Clarissa Harlowe." Thomson's "Castle of Indolence." Smollett's "Roderick Random."	
1749. Fielding's "Tom Jones." Johnson's "Vanity of Human Wishes."	
1749-1756. Swedenborg's "Arcana Cœlestia."	
1750-1752. Johnson's <i>Rambler</i> .	
1750-1753. Voltaire at the Court of Frederick the Great.	

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1751-1760

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American History	American Literature
	1751. John Bartram, "On American Plants."
1752. First dramatic performances in America.	1753. John Woolman, "On the Keeping of Negroes."
1753. Nassau Street Theater, N.Y., opened.	1754. Franklin's "Plan for Union of the Colonies." Washington's "Journal of an Expedition to the Ohio River."
1754. (King's) Columbia College founded.	Edwards, "On the Will."
1755. "French and Indian War." Defeat of Braddock. Deportation of the Arcadian villagers.	1758. Edwards, "On Original Sin." Franklin's "Father Abraham's Speech" (in last number of Poor Richard's Almanac).
1759. Death of Wolfe and Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham. Fall of Quebec.	

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1761-1770

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1761. Writs of Assistance in Boston.	1761. James Otis's speech against the Writs of Assistance.
1763. Conspiracy of Pontiac. Mason and Dixon's line established.	1762. Otis's "Vindication of the House of Representatives."
1765-1766. The Stamp Act.	1764. Franklin's "Cool Thoughts on the Present Situation." Thomas Hutchinson's "History of Massachusetts," Vol. I. Otis's "Rights of the British Colonies."
	1767. "Andrew Barton's Disappointment" (a comic opera) performed in New York.

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1751-1760

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English and European Literature	English and European History
1751. Gray's "Elegy."	
1753. Richardson's "Sir Charles Grandison."	
1754-1762. Hume's "History of England."	
1755. Johnson's "Dictionary."	
1756. Burke's "Essay on the Sublime."	1756. Englishmen imprisoned in the Black Hole of Calcutta.
1757. Gray's "Odes."	
1758. Johnson's "Idler."	
1759. Johnson's "Rasselas." Sterne's "Tristram Shandy."	
	1760. Accession of George III.

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1761-1770

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1761. Rousseau's "Social Contract."	
1762. Macpherson's "Poems of Ossian."	
1764. Goldsmith's "Traveler." Walpole's "Castle of Otranto."	
Rousseau's "Emile."	
1765. Percy's "Reliques of Poetry."	
Blackstone's "Commentaries"	
1766. "Vicar of Wakefield."	
Lessing's "Laocon."	
1767. Lessing's "Minna von Barnhelm."	

1761-1770 — *Continued*

American History	American Literature	
1768. General Gage garrisons Boston.	1768. Samuel Adams, "A Circular Letter to Colonial Legislatures."	
1770. The Boston Massacre.	1769. Samuel Adams, "An Appeal to the World."	1770. Joseph Warren's Oration on the Boston Massacre. John Adams's "Defense of the British Soldiers."

## 1771-1780

1773. Tea destroyed in Boston harbor.	1771. Franklin's "Autobiography," Chapters I-V written. (Published 1817.)
1774. First Continental Congress.	1772. Death of John Woolman. (His Journal was first published 1774.)
1775. April 19, Battle of Lexington. June 17, Bunker Hill.	1775-1776. <i>The Pennsylvania Magazine</i> , edited by Thomas Paine.
1776. Declaration of Independence.	1776. Thomas Paine's "Common Sense." Paine's "Crisis," No. 1.
1777. Articles of Confederation. Surrender of Burgoyne. Washington winters at Valley Forge.	
1778. Treaty between France and U.S.A.	
1779. Paul Jones's victories with <i>Bon Homme Richard</i> .	1779. Ethan Allen's "Narrative of Captivity."

## 1781-1790

1781. Articles of Confederation ratified by the States. Surrender of Lord Cornwallis.	1781. Freneau's "British Prisonship."
1782. Independence of United States recognized.	1782. Crèvecoeur (Hector St. John), "Letters from an American Farmer."

1761-1770 — *Continued*

English and European Literature	English and European History
1769. Burke's "Present State of the Nation."	1769. Patents for Watt's steam engine and Arkwright's spinning frame.
1769-1772. Junius's Letters.	
1770. Goldsmith's "Deserted Village."	1770. Lord North prime minister.

## 1771-1780

1771. "Encyclopædia Britannica," first edition.	
1771-1774. Beattie's "Minstrel."	
1773. Goldsmith's "She Stoops to Conquer."	
1774. Goethe's "Werther."	1774. Boston Port Bill.
1775. Burke, "On Conciliation with America."	
Johnson's "Taxation no Tyranny."	
Sheridan's "The Rivals."	
1776. Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations."	
1776-1788. Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."	
1777. Sheridan's "School for Scandal."	
1778. Miss Burney's "Evelina."	
1779-1781. Johnson's "Lives of the Poets."	
Lessing's "Nathan the Wise."	

## 1781-1790

1781. Crabbe's Library.	
Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason."	
1782. Miss Burney's "Cecilia."	

1781-1790 — *Continued*

American History	American Literature
1783. Treaty of Paris.	1782. Trumbull's "M'Fingal." English Bible first printed in America.
1787. Constitutional Convention. Shays's Rebellion.	1783. Paine's "Crisis," last number. 1785. Timothy Dwight's "Conquest of Canaan."
1788. Constitution ratified by eleven states.	1786. Freneau's Poems.
1789-1797. Washington's Presidency.	1787. Joel Barlow's "Vision of Columbus" (afterward called the "Columbiad").
1790. Death of Franklin.	1789. Franklin's "Autobiography," last chapters written. Washington's "Inaugural Address."

## 1791-1800

1797-1801. John Adams's Presidency.	1791. Paine's "Rights of Man." 1793. Joel Barlow's "Hasty Pudding" written. (Printed, 1796.) Washington's Second Inaugural. 1794-1796. Paine's "Age of Reason." 1794. John Adams's "History of Republics." Dwight's "Greenfield Hill." Freneau's "Village Merchant."
1799. Death of Washington.	1795. Lindley Murray's English Grammar. 1796. Washington's Farewell Address. 1798. Charles Brockden Brown's "Wieland." 1800. Barlow's "Letters from Paris." Bowditch's "Practical Navigator." Daniel Webster's Fourth of July Speech. Greek Testament first printed in America. (Worcester, Mass.)

1781-1790 — *Continued*

English and European Literature	English and European History
1783. Crabbe's "Village."	
1785. Paley's "Moral Philosophy."	
Cowper's "Task."	
Boswell's "Hebrides."	
1786. Burns's Poems in Scottish dialect.	
1787. Goethe's "Iphigenia."	
1788. <i>London Times</i> founded.	
1789. Blake's "Songs of Innocence,"	1789. Storming of the Bastile.
Erasmus Darwin's "Loves of the Plants,"	
White's "Natural History of Selborne."	
1790. Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution."	1790. Revolution in France.

## 1791-1800

1791. Boswell's "Life of Johnson."	1792. Abolition of monarchy in France.
1794. Paley's "Evidences of Christianity."	1793. Execution of Louis XVI. Reign of Terror in France.
Godwin's "Political Justice."	
1797. Goethe's "Hermann und Dorothea."	1795. Final partition of Poland.
1798. Lyrical ballads of Wordsworth and Coleridge. ("Ancient Mariner," "Tintern Abbey,")	1798. Great Rebellion in Ireland.
1800. Schiller's "Wallenstein."	1799. Napoleon First Consul.

Washington  
Irving,  
1783-1859.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FIRST MASTERS

#### I. WASHINGTON IRVING

NONE of the men we have discussed thus far belonged to the nineteenth century. All were born, all save Brown were of age, when independence was won. There is no book published in America before 1800 which has now a standing in general literature. Our subject, then, is hereafter the literature of the nineteenth century. That century may be roughly divided into three generations, indicated, for instance, by the active career of three such men as Cooper, Hawthorne, and Mark Twain. At the very threshold stands a most genial figure, emphasizing once again the essentially English character of our culture.

The life of Irving shows how easily and naturally the true artist, when he comes, finds himself, and finds his place in the world. Irving was a happy man. He suffered deeply, of course, else he could not have known life adequately; but he had little indeed to regret, at the peaceful close of his long and illustrious career.

There is a popular engraving, "Irving and his Friends," which assembles about him all the chief authors of our first period, down to Lowell, his junior by thirty-five years. It illustrates well the

extreme shortness of our story, that even Colonel Higginson, who is to-day still in active service, was more than "midway on life's path" when our first successful man of letters ended his days at Sunnyside. It is most true, too, that all men were Irving's friends.

The father of our first great author had been a seafarer, born in the Orkneys, and descended from a noble Scottish house. His mother was English, and the parents came to New York, soon after their marriage, in 1763. The father was a stern, austere man, yet he may have transmitted, with Keltic blood, the imaginative power with which the youngest of his eleven children was richly endowed. A delicate lad and youth, indeed threatened repeatedly with consumption, Washington was evidently the indulged favorite of the family. He perused his Bible and "Pilgrim's Progress" on Sundays, "Arabian Nights," "Gulliver," "Robinson Crusoe," etc., on other days, studied comparatively little, but read voraciously. He was not, like his sturdier elder brothers, sent to Columbia College.

A happy boyhood.

Leaving school at sixteen, he later was admitted to the bar, on very meager legal knowledge, but never practiced seriously. He was from childhood a constant rambler, as the first paper of the "Sketch-Book" delightfully tells us. New York already had a theater, to which, even as a boy, he had made stolen visits. There was also a rather gay and fast society to which the handsome youth had full entry. At nineteen he had already written for the *Morning Chronicle* audacious satirical letters on social follies, drama, etc., quite in the old *Spectator* style.

A few years later he and his friend Paulding worked the same vein farther in *Salmagundi*. Such a happy, free, and stimulating youth time was then possible in no other American city.

Sent abroad at twenty for his health, he spent in Europe two delightful years. He was admitted freely to the best foreign and American society, apparently on his personal attractions. At Rome the influence of his namesake, Washington Allston, himself romancer and poet as well as artist, came near making Irving a painter. He seemed, even to himself, an idler. In truth, he was acquiring, with the miraculous ease of a true artist-nature, cosmopolitan culture. Though certainly no ascetic, at home or abroad, he had a much more delicate innate refinement than Franklin, and could doubtless assert with Milton, if in a less austere sense, as to the temptations of Italy or Paris, "I change but the sky, not my nature, in crossing the sea."

At twenty-six, Irving, at first collaborating with his brother Peter, began, in light-hearted fashion, a travesty upon Dr. Mitchell's pedantic "Picture of New York," then just published. Out of this grew, as by accident, his delicious "Knickerbocker History." The creation of old Diedrich himself is a miniature masterpiece. The half-genuine erudition of the first five chapters, from the Creation to Hendrick Hudson, indeed, grows rather heavy; but the broad fun of the pretended Dutch annals themselves makes an unforgettable book. The very vogue of "Knickerbocker," as a household word ever since, is a proof of lasting fame. Irving's work even stimulated serious study of the forgotten Dutch period

Washington  
Allston,  
1779-1843.

"Knicker-  
bocker  
History,"  
1809.

in local history. This was the first American book of any international popularity, as Franklin's "Autobiography" was kept by his grandson in manuscript until 1817.

Even now Irving did not think of letters as a serious profession. He seems, indeed, to have been quite willing to remain dependent upon his elder brothers, in whose mercantile firm he had a nominal position. Just at this time, 1809, he lost his early love, Matilda Hoffman, whom he mourned all his life. In February, 1815, he again went abroad, and remained, for various reasons, seventeen years, a time in which he wrote his most characteristic books. These years include some creditable service as an attaché of our foreign embassies. But it is quite needless to defend his lifelong patriotism, or the adequately national quality of his best work. That he felt close kinship and sympathy with the best traditions of England is his greatest good fortune, and ours. His parentage must have made it doubly natural to feel at ease in "Our Old Home."

The "Sketch-Book" appeared in numbers, and also in book form, first in America, then in England to forestall piracy. Lovers of the work will recall the present Preface, added thirty years after, detailing Irving's delightful relations with Walter Scott at this early time. The Irvings had meanwhile failed in business, and from this period the popular author-brother was the chief breadwinner of the harmonious and loving family. This supplied a stimulus, perhaps needed, for a serious career, and even, apparently, gave us the "Sketch-Book."

It is needless to analyze a book which is familiar

"Sketch-  
Book,"  
1819-1820.

in every American school. The genial, leisurely style of Irving was formed on the best eighteenth century English prose, from Addison to Goldsmith. It is a style to which the crisper sentence, the swifter thrust, of Macaulay is now generally preferred ; but the expression was perfectly fitted to the man and the material. No writer wins more quickly, or holds longer, our affection and good will. The evident purpose is to please and divert the reader. Pathos is attempted occasionally, with moderate success. Of strenuous ethical effort there is little trace.

The "Sketch-Book" is frankly cosmopolitan in its subjects, but Rip Van Winkle and Sleepy Hollow are at least among the best chapters. Dolph Heyliger, in "Bracebridge Hall," another study of Dutch character and local legend, is a signal success in the same home field ; while "John Bull" reminds us at times of Lowell's boldest Yankee satire. Professor Wendell remarks that Irving set the fashion for that form of short story which is still especially an American art, — or was, at least, down to Mr. Kipling's advent. "Bracebridge Hall" and "Tales of a Traveler" are later, not better, runnings of the same wine. Most of the former might have been written by a rural Englishman.

"Bracebridge Hall," 1822.

Irving in Spain, 1826-1829.  
"Columbus," 1828.  
"Granada," 1829.  
"Companions of Columbus," 1831.

Irving's love of Spain led to his residence there for over three years, to which we owe the lives of Columbus and his companions, "The Alhambra," "Conquest of Granada," and kindred studies. His sympathy with the painter's method is here especially felt. The picturesque impressions, the soft, glowing color, the indefinable aroma of mediæval Spain, are on almost every page of his "Alhambra." There

are plenty of more learned and exhaustive historians. He may not always be accurate ; he is always graceful, vivid, humane, readable.

"Alham-  
bra," 1832.

Returning home in 1832, Irving soon settled in his beautiful "Sunnyside" at Tarrytown, on the Hudson which he had made doubly famous, and close by his own Sleepy Hollow. This was home to him for a quarter century. He, in fact, only deserted it once, reluctantly, to become for four years minister to Spain. This proposal was made by Daniel Webster, and even Henry Clay remarked, "*This* is a nomination everybody will concur in !" Since then Bancroft, Hawthorne, Boker, Motley, Lowell, Taylor, Howells, Harte, Hardy, and other literary men have represented us officially abroad.

Irving min-  
ister to  
Spain,  
1842-1846.

The large "Life of Washington" was the task, almost too heavy, of Irving's old age. The delightful study of Goldsmith, a most congenial subject, was thrown off, with utmost ease, at sixty-six.

"Life of  
Wash-  
ington,"  
1855-1859.  
"Gold-  
smith,"  
1849.

Irving was not a great original thinker, reformer, or masterful spirit in any field. He founded no definite school, though he has had a most helpful and genial influence on all literature since. He saw much beauty, and makes us see it, especially in the romantic past. Whether he created, or found ready to his hand, the best legendary lore of the Hudson Valley, is a problem still discussed. His effects always seem to be attained with as little effort as Raphael's, but this, surely, is but evidence of perfect balance, sanity, instinctive self-knowledge. He was a most tender-hearted, generous, lovable man, a cosmopolitan in manners, tastes, and accomplishments, yet withal a loyal, simple-hearted American.

Finally, he was a consummate literary artist, since he combined rich creative imagination, restraining taste,—and moral intention. The last is the least obtrusive quality, but present in all his mature works, from the "Sketch-Book" onward.

But for the merciless yet delicious travesty in Ichabod Crane, we might perhaps regret that gentle Irving shared Cooper's fiercer dislike for the obtrusive, masterful, progressive *Yankee*. Yet he would hardly have rejected the epitaph written for him by our best beloved down-east poet:—

"In the  
Churchyard  
at  
Tarry-  
town,"  
by  
Longfellow.

" How sweet a life was his, how sweet a death !  
Living, to wing with mirth the weary hours,  
Dying, to leave a memory like the breath  
Of summers full of sunshine and of showers."

Irving might, indeed, have objected, as Holmes has done, to being thus classified so decidedly by Longfellow as a humorist. He was particularly pleased when a critic discovered a moral lurking about his "Fat Gentleman,"—the slightest and most aimless of masterpieces,—and insisted that he always had one in mind. So constant is the Puritan strain of seriousness in all Anglo-Saxon art.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Irving's works, twenty-three volumes, and "Life and Letters," by his nephew, Pierre, four volumes, are published by the Putnams, New York. An excellent brief study of him, by a kindred spirit, is C. D. Warner's in "American Men of Letters." Of the "Sketch-Book" there are numberless editions, with notes, for schools.

For this and nearly every following section Lowell's "Fable for Critics" must be consulted.

## TOPICS FOR CLASSROOM WORK

As the first of our popular authors, Irving's career deserves especial attention. From his letters abundant personal details can be drawn. Such interviews as those with Mrs. Siddons, the poet Campbell's wife, Scott, etc., can be effectively rehearsed. The chief source for these also is, of course, Irving's own letters. The best scenes of the "Knickerbocker" could be connected with study of more serious annals of early New York, as, for instance, Brodhead's two volumes, or the more luminous book of John Fiske, on the Dutch and Quaker colonists. Indeed, the lives of Columbus and Washington also should be regularly used in the work on American history itself, if only for their graceful style and vivid pictures. Any study of the best American humor must include much of Irving. A local story, like "Dolph Heyliger," may be compared with a rural English and a Spanish tale, as skillful studies in local color.

## II. JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

Cooper's life was in part almost as stormy as Walter Savage Landor's, yet not as a whole tragical, nor, probably, unhappy. His childhood was spent on the wild shores of Otsego Lake, New York, where his father had extensive estates upon the very edge of the trackless wilderness. His love of the forest and lakes was lifelong. Coached for college by a rather bigoted English clergyman, he was dismissed from Yale when a junior, for idleness and mischief (1805). After brief training in a merchantman, his father, an ex-congressman, easily obtained him a midshipman's berth (1808). The very next year he was one of a small naval party sent to Oswego, then a village of huts, to build, and launch on Lake Ontario, a brig of sixteen guns. In 1811 he married Susan De Lancey, of a prominent old Huguenot and "Tory" family. This marriage

James  
Fenimore  
Cooper,  
1789-1851.

A roman-  
cer's 'pre-  
tice years.

was a most happy one. They had four daughters and one son, who survived them. Mrs. Cooper induced her husband promptly to leave the navy, and, more reluctantly, to settle among her people in Westchester County, New York (1817).

These details all have a direct bearing on Cooper's literary career, but at thirty he had never thought of writing. He was a fairly well-read man of wide-ranging experience, intense but narrow social and religious feelings, utterly fearless, patriotic, and affectionate, chiefly absorbed in his family and estate.

A poor English society novel suggested to him an attempt to surpass it. His effort, "Precaution,"

"Precaution," 1820.

wretchedly printed and given out as an Englishman's book, was a bad failure. Indeed, he knew nothing of artificial overcivilized society, and never acquired any skill in such themes. The failure itself aroused him, and the patriotic Revolutionary tale, "The Spy," though written with many misgivings, was a great success. Harvey Birch is still a favorite character all the world over. Thanks in some degree to the gentle treatment of Tory characters, the book made a great and immediate sensation even in England, where Irving helped secure a publisher. Next year it was translated into French, then into many languages.

"Spy,"  
1821.

The popularity of Cooper the romancer has never flagged since then. More, probably, than Scott himself, he is the world's favorite as a story-teller. He received large sums for each and all his thirty-odd romances. Sydney Smith's scornful query, "Who reads an American book?" had its prompt and final answer: All the world reads Cooper.

His third tale, "The Pioneers," Cooper "wrote to please himself." The scenes are on his beloved Otsego. The types of the frontier life are memories from his boyhood. Here already we meet his Indians, chivalric and stanch in friendship, poetic and flowery in speech, yet savages still to the core. Even the immortal Leatherstocking appears, already an old man. Above all, the love of the wilderness, the rhapsodies over forest scenery and life, recur in nearly every chapter.

In 1817 had begun, with a certain suddenness, that great *Trek* from New England and the whole East, westward beyond the Ohio,—a movement which, reënforced more and more from beyond the Atlantic, was destined never to cease until the buffalo, the wild Indian, the frontier itself, have all become merely a memory, soon to be a tradition only. The majestic meaning of that migration Cooper fully realized, and uttered in the closing lines of "The Pioneers."

He lived to write better stories than this. "Deer-slayer" gives us a far more perfect panorama of Otsego. Both that tale and "Pathfinder" offer a much nobler and completer portraiture of Leatherstocking. "The Prairie" affords an unrivaled picture of the wild social life among the true pioneers, and of its primeval environment. The popular favorite among all the Leatherstocking Tales, however, is "The Last of the Mohicans."

Nevertheless, Cooper's essential qualities were already clear. The novel of incident with simple characters of humble social rank, in an outdoor setting, was a mighty instrument, fitted to his hand as perhaps to no other. One wide domain he had

"Deer-slayer,"  
1841.

"Path-finder,"  
1840.

"Prairie,"  
1827.

"Last of the  
Mohicans,"  
1826.

"Pilot,"  
1824.  
"Red  
Rover,"  
1828.

"History of  
American  
Navy,"  
1839.  
"Biogra-  
phies,"  
1846.

"Home as  
Found,"  
1838

still to enter, for he knew the sea at least as well as the forest. "The Pilot," suggested by Scott's "Pirate,"—which Cooper thought a good piece of work by a landsman,—appeared early in 1824, "The Red Rover" in 1828. These and other such tales of the wilderness and of the ocean are Cooper's chief gifts to men. They are abiding sources of healthful enjoyment to millions of readers.

Later in life he made a most exhaustive and impartial history of the American navy, followed by biographies of our early marine heroes. This is still an indispensable and authoritative work. But unhappily these are not the chief events of Cooper's later years.

Success brought large income, as well as fame. During 1822–1826 Cooper lived in New York City, and was the center of the best literary circle then existing in the States, including Bryant, Halleck, etc. The years 1826 to 1833 he and his family spent in Europe. But Cooper had not the genial nature, the cosmopolitan sympathies, the open mind, the artistic restraint, of Irving, or of Longfellow. He was pugnacious, hypercritical, opinionated. He misused most grossly the form of romance, making it the vehicle for savage attacks on the English people and others, later for even more savage diatribes against his own folk, especially in "Home as Found."

He became personally the best-hated man in both hemispheres: while yet some of his bitterest foes spent sleepless nights devouring his latest romances. He entered on a long series of libel suits against the chief newspapers of his state. These suits he conducted chiefly in person, with consummate ability and energy, and invariably won. But the force

and time thus squandered might better have been spent in perfecting his masterpieces.

The detailed story of Cooper's later life, as set forth masterfully by Professor Lounsbury, is a most fascinating psychological study. Yet it throws little light on his purely literary career. The charming preface composed by his daughter for "*Deerslayer*" gives an impression that his delight in such creative work, and his happy family life, were hardly ruffled by the storm of slanderous abuse that beat upon him for twenty years.

In the very last year of his life there was a widespread reaction, and a general expression of pride in our greatest romancer. Upon his deathbed he, unfortunately for us, forbade any publication of his letters or biographical materials in the family possession. He died, as he had lived since his return to America, in the paternal homestead at Cooperstown on Otsego, since destroyed by fire.

Cooper himself was fully aware of his inferiority to Scott as to breadth of range and vigor in character drawing. He has nothing of Hawthorne's marvelous genius in the choice and arrangement of words. He is no supreme master of insight into the mysterious depths of the human heart. Nearly all his work bears marks of haste, and slight incongruities, even in the simple plots, are easily found. In general he will never appeal as strongly to the highly cultivated and critical few as do George Eliot, Thackeray, Balzac, and Scott, at their best.

Yet our national attitude toward Cooper should always be one of pride and abundant gratitude. Heroic manliness, loyal good fellowship, even be-

tween men of diverse races, healthful outdoor life, simplicity of speech and action, generosity toward the weak, devout faith in God, he has depicted, as he exemplified them in his own life. In impressing upon the imagination the large outlines and grandeur of nature upon our continent, he is perhaps superior to Bryant, to Parkman, or to any other. He and his Leatherstocking will always stand among the most heroic figures in our first century of true literature. Moreover, judged by the extent of his influence as a popular author, he is quite unrivaled among Americans, possibly among all mankind; that is perhaps of itself a sufficient monument. Over his grave in the Cooperstown cemetery towers, most fitly, an heroic statue of Leatherstocking.

While Irving was matured, Cooper seems to have been only distracted, by life abroad. But of each it is true, that he won his first notable success at home, with a native subject, and repeated the same feat often in later life. Both belonged by birth to the middle East. Irving was almost English still, while Cooper, the less mellow nature, came of long American descent. Irving was a cosmopolitan artist; his Spanish works, perhaps his English sketches, are as skillful, though not so novel and original, as his Dutch pictures. Cooper's native Americans, white or red, are always better drawn than his Europeans. These two men and their friends seem to demonstrate that in and about New York the conditions favorable to literary success were first attained. The third member of our first notable group was, like Franklin, a Westward pilgrim from true Puritan stock.

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There are numberless editions of the novels. Perhaps "The Mohawk" (Putnams, New York) in thirty-two volumes is the most available. More popular than any other tale is "Last of the Mohicans" (1826), for which there are annotated school editions galore. See especially Strunk's, Globe School Book Company, 1900.

Professor Lounsbury, who wrote on Cooper for the "American Men of Letters," had of course a peculiarly difficult task. Some of Cooper's own prefaces and notes occasionally give helpful light on his life and work. Some personal details may be sought also in Wilson's "Bryant and his Friends."

## SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASS WORK

Special studies of actual American landscape and scenery may be very profitably made in connection with Cooper. The contrast of his accounts with present conditions is often most striking. His delineation of Indians may be compared with Hiawatha, Ramona, with Simms's powerful figures in "The Yemassee," and with the real red man. A special study of Leatherstocking, carried through the five tales where he appears, may be made. Cooper's rougher borderers, women, and sailors, and his own religious ideas, are also stimulating topics. The larger histories of the "French and Indian" War, e.g. Parkman's "Wolfe and Montcalm," should perhaps be combined with the reading of "The Last of the Mohicans." But for boys Cooper will need no bush.

## III. WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Through his mother, Bryant, like Longfellow, was descended from John Alden; and the Bryants were also of Pilgrim stock. The poet was born in Cummington, Massachusetts, the son of a country doctor, of moderate means. The father was a lover of good literature, in sympathy with the boy's taste for versifying. One of Bryant's earliest favorites was Pope's

William  
Cullen  
Bryant,  
1794-1878.

Homer. He was early well grounded in Greek and Latin, but after two years at Williams College (then a small school), he changed over to the study of law (1812). But "Thanatopsis" had even then been written. Though improved in a later revision, this was an amazing performance for any boy of seventeen. No wonder that the law soon grew distasteful. The chief marvel is that the genius of Bryant is still best illustrated by these first verses. Even "The Flood of Years," sixty-four years later, is simply a good pendant to "Thanatopsis," which seems the utterance of an octogenarian no less.

In 1821, two years after the "Sketch-Book," appeared Cooper's "Spy" and Bryant's collected poems. This is the true beginning of our literary annals. The most ambitious and scholarly of the poems, "The Ages," had just been composed for the Harvard Phi Beta Kappa society. His verses brought to the young country lawyer an invitation to New York (1825) as assistant editor of a short-lived magazine. In 1826 he became assistant editor, from 1829 to 1878 was editor-in-chief, of the *New York Evening Post*. He, with Peter Cooper and Horace Greeley, were for many years, perhaps, the best-known citizens of the swift-growing metropolis. His married life (1821-1866) was ideally happy.

It may at first appear as if Bryant must have been distracted by journalism from a fuller and richer career as a poet. He himself, in the earlier decades, often repined, and struggled to escape. But it is more likely that in both careers he accomplished just what he was best fitted to do.

His poetic message is fully and clearly uttered.

"Poems,"  
1821.

He is certainly akin to Wordsworth, though far less a mystic even than he. He has no such keen sympathy with other souls, and no such dramatic creativeness, as Coleridge revealed at once by his "Ancient Mariner." Our boyhood's favorite, "The African Chief," has indeed a certain dramatic quality; but the incident, in every detail, was true, and Bryant only transferred it to smooth verse. He is a moral and didactic poet, always, speaking in his own calm, deliberate, manly voice; and his verse is nearly all the expression of a single mood: pensive reverence. "Nature is eternal, man ephemeral;" that is his first and last word. In "Thanatopsis," hills and vales, woods and rivers, and

A poet of  
one mood:  
reverent  
faith.

"Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,  
Are but the solemn decorations all  
Of the great tomb of man."

So, riding on the "Flood of Years," we behold feast- "Flood of  
ers and toilers, sturdy swain and pallid student,— Years,"  
1876.

"A moment on the mounting billows seen,  
The flood sweeps over them and they are gone."

Bryant, then, by no means fulfilled Emerson's vision of a time when all "that which is now life shall be poetry, and every fair and manly trait shall add a richer strain to the song." To this sturdy Puritanic reformer, politician, orator, editor, most of life expressed itself in plain, often polemic, prose. In weariness, grief, or discouragement, he turns to nature *for consolation*, and to his verse, so inspired, other men turn, in just such hours.

Clear, pure, and somewhat cold, that utterance flows. He sounds no trumpet call to action, that

Our native  
poets have  
neglected  
their Greek  
masters.

could fire the heart of a youth, or a people, like the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," or Lowell's "Present Crisis." Even the closing stanzas of his most ambitious poem, "The Ages," leave us simply pensive still. In a war lyric, the strongest stanza, his most famous quatrain, is a moral text after all: "Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again."

His utterance is always easy, natural, and dignified. Often it is sublime. His simple metrical forms are always befitting. His majestic "blank verse," in particular, is at times almost Miltonic, certainly quite unapproached by our other poets. His large, serene outlines complete the picture he would set before us, and the last stanza often unites and uplifts the whole. "The Evening Wind" and "Crowded Street" are among the simplest examples of this quiet artistic mastery shown in the final touch.

Late in life Bryant translated the entire "Iliad" and "Odyssey" into smooth, dignified, rather slow, blank verse. Despite some little embroidery of Homer's plainest passages, this rendering is a very faithful one. It was a large and helpful tribute to classical humanism, the largest yet made by an American. Indeed, our other most prominent authors have had very inadequate familiarity with those Hellenic masterpieces from which Milton, Gray, Landor, Tennyson, Swinburne, and Stephen Phillips have drawn so large a share of inspiration.

Bryant's physical vitality was wonderful. He was never ill, and retained perfect command of all his organs and muscles to eighty-four. His death was the result of a fall just after delivering one of his memorable public orations, at the erection of a

statue to Mazzini, the Italian patriot. It would be difficult to find or to imagine a happier end. In spite of constant generous and quiet charity in his lifetime, Mr. Bryant left a large fortune. The *Post*, in particular, after many years of heroic struggle and scanty income, finally became a very valuable property.

Besides his poems, Bryant is of some importance here for his memorial addresses, beginning with those upon Cooper and Irving. His own life work, in turn, was nobly summed up in an eloquent oration by George William Curtis. His conscientious work on the *Post* for a half-century has entered into the very growth of the nation, but it is the doom of all such writing to perish with the contests and problems of the passing day.

Mr. Bryant, especially in old age, had a most noble head and face, often reproduced in sculpture, painting, and the lesser arts of design. A striking portrait statue stands in the park renamed after him by the city of New York. The great city has known no purer, busier, more conscientious life. To give him the foremost, or a foremost, place among our poets seems to one at a distance the wholly uncritical partiality of personal affection.

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Bryant's life has been written, and his works, both prose and poetry, edited by Parke Godwin. The life, by his friend John Bigelow, in "American Men of Letters," is discursive, but gives some striking glimpses of its rather elusive subject. R. H. Stoddard, in his prefatory essay to the poems, claims for Bryant the highest position. The latest edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica does not mention him at all.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM WORK

Such verse as the "Inscription" (beginning, "The thick roof"), "A Rain-Dream," "Robert of Lincoln," "Death of the Flowers," "The Prairies," "The Fountain," etc., should be verified in each detail, *in the open air*. The "Antiquity of Freedom" combines happily his best qualities; the personifications and the allusion to our liberty cap, which is the mitra of the ancient Phrygian and fez of the modern Asiatic, will bear careful explanation. Bryant's fullest revelation of personal and religious feeling is in "The Cloud on the Way." (See Bigelow's "Life," p. 283.) Is Bryant cold? Is he monotonous? Does he dwell too constantly on death rather than life?

What our poets say of each other is of interest. Lowell especially, in the "Fable for Critics," analyzes Bryant; in his letters he expresses regret for his rather audacious tone. On Bryant's seventieth birthday there are notable poems by Holmes, Whittier, Lowell, Taylor, Stoddard, and others. See also Stoddard's and Stedman's poems after the master's death. Bryant himself could not write "occasional" verse.

The simple, austere, daily life of the old poet is itself a profitable study. (See especially Bigelow's "Life," pp. 259-263.)

## IV. THE "KNICKERBOCKER" GROUP

We have now seen three men, of unquestioned importance in literature, rise suddenly into general notice about the year 1820. Of course they were not alone. Most of the lesser writers are already forgotten, with the numberless ambitious but short-lived literary periodicals of their day. But the careers of Irving, Cooper, and Bryant sufficed to prove that a strong man of letters could have a successful career, and, directly or indirectly, could win through his writings fame, a livelihood, even wealth.

Perhaps the most serious loss to our early literature was the premature death of Drake. His "Cul-

prit Fay" was composed in three days, at the age of twenty-one, and it still remains the best poem of purely creative fancy, based on real familiarity with outdoor sights and sounds, yet produced on American soil. It is almost as free from the Puritan temptation to preach in verse as Poe's best lyrics. In both respects it will bear comparison with Lowell's "Launfal," a didactic story from an alien atmosphere. This pure, happy, enthusiastic poet had, to be sure, lived as many years as Keats: but even the lyric singer may come late to his heritage, as Béranger did, or Clough.

Fitz-Greene Halleck, on the other hand, lived out a long and useful life, fully demonstrating that he belonged, in letters, to the useful but commonplace majority, the men of lovable character, fair taste, and industrious effort. He is uplifted into momentary prominence by his devotion to Drake, whom he lamented in a famous bit of tender verse: —

"Green be the turf above thee."

The modern Greeks appreciate his spirited lyric on Marcos Bózzaris, though they are amused that he employed by mistake the vocative form of the first name, and shifted the accent on the second.

Irving's lifelong friend, James K. Paulding, is still remembered for his poem, "The Backwoodsman" (1818), his "Dutchman's Fireside" (1831), still valuable for its vivid "local color," or his "Life of Washington" (1835). His larger energies were devoted to political satire, and to politics.

These, with Willis, who will be mentioned later, are the chief minor figures in the "Knickerbocker"

Joseph  
Rodman  
Drake,  
1795-1820.

Fitz-Greene  
Halleck,  
1790-1867.

James K.  
Paulding,  
1779-1860.

group. We may perhaps best add here the most isolated and unaccountable figure in American letters, since his meteoric career at least belongs to the same section of the country, and essentially to the same generation.

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See especially, for the periodical literature of this time, the monograph of Dr. W. B. Cairns, "On the Development of American Literature from 1815 to 1833." Wisconsin University, 1898. As to Paulding, Drake, and Halleck, the student will find sufficient extracts in the Stedman Library.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

The "Culprit Fay" should be read and studied, lovingly, for its graceful and local "fauna and flora," as well as for its exuberant fancy. The instructor may of course open also the whole world of Faerie, from Spenser and "Midsummer Night's Dream" down, or up, to the Keltic sources. (See, e.g., Keightley's "Fairy Mythology.")

#### V. EDGAR ALLAN POE

Edgar Allan  
Poe,  
1809-1849.

Less than any other author is Poe, the romancer and poet, to be interpreted by his surroundings and outward life. Indeed, his creations have as little vital relation with mankind as could well be. In him more than in almost any other man, unless it be Shelley, an alien soul seems to be beating its wings against the barred cage of human incarnation. So we can hardly hope that this author's environment will be of essential aid in the study of his works. There is at least, however, much in the tale of Poe's youth to soften any austere Puritanic judgment upon his grievous failings as a man. He does not seem to

me ever to have been fully sane. His high-strung nerves, distracting indulgence from earliest childhood, wild temper, and ecstatic unearthly imagination, probably made it impossible for him to lead what we regard as a normal or rational life.

Of partly Keltic stock, Poe was the child of a pair of actors, born in Boston when his mother was an active member of a traveling company. Two years later she died in poverty, and her three infants were scattered among strangers. Poe's father seems to have been already dead from consumption. Edgar's foster father, Mr. Allan, received him at first reluctantly, at his wife's entreaty, but brought him up in extravagant luxury. He was educated in England and in Richmond, Virginia, in fashionable private schools. The boy, like the man, was capricious, dictatorial, vain, jealous, selfish by instinct, yet at times generous in fitful fashion. He was a brilliant student, and excelled in running and swimming. A fancied disappointment in love came very early into his boyish experience. Of real friendship he was, perhaps, never capable.

When he entered the University of Virginia, in 1826, he was already fond of drinking brandy and of card playing. Ten months later he came home to Richmond with highest honors in languages,—and a burden of twenty-five hundred dollars of gambling debts, which Mr. Allan refused to pay. Poe promptly ran away to Boston, published a very thin volume of aërial juvenile verse, and enlisted as a private in the regular army, swearing that he was already of age. Mrs. Allan died in 1829. Perhaps at her last request, Poe's release was soon after obtained, and

July 1, 1830, he entered West Point, again falsifying the record of his age, as he was really too old for the academy. Six months later he obtained his discharge there, by court-martial for flagrant disobedience. Mr. Allan had married again, and from this time utterly cast off his foster son.

Poe now attempted to support himself by his pen, first in Baltimore. Only the kindly friendship of J. P. Kennedy, apparently, kept him from absolute starvation. In 1835 he married his cousin, a child of thirteen. The story of his struggles for a living, as editor, author, and hack-writer, in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York, his quarrels with co-editors, employers, and others, his lapses into drunkenness and opium-eating, are only too familiar. His child wife clung to him fondly till she died, in utter poverty, in 1847. His own death, two years afterward, was under peculiarly harrowing and ignominious conditions.

John P.  
Kennedy,  
1795-1870.

Hawthorne,  
contrasted  
with Poe, is  
sane.

Poe's tales and poems hardly touch on these facts, or, indeed, upon ordinary human conditions at all. Whenever we take up any page of his, we instantly step, as it were, into another region than reality, into an air charged with mysterious sounds, and terrors vaguely felt. Even his most detailed descriptions, as of the house of Usher, or of the chamber into which the raven flits, only heighten our sense of utmost remoteness. Hawthorne's realm is still our familiar world, though a soft gray light transforms it, and we walk with him strangely endowed, for the hour, with a supernatural insight into the mind and heart of any brother-mortal whom we meet; under Poe's guidance, we can never surmise what will

happen, save that we are not to escape until our nerves are duly unstrung.

Poe believed and taught that poetry, or any form of true literature, must make its effective appeal, through the feelings only, to our innate sense of beauty. For those men, the overwhelming majority, who believe that language, however imaginative, must always address itself, rather, through the reason and experience, to our consciousness of moral truth, Poe's finest utterance can be little save sound and fury. Emerson, himself a lifelong rhymer, when Poe's name was mentioned, only recalled him, with an effort, as "the jingle man"!

Yet Poe saw and revealed, as no American had done before him, at least the silvery side of a great artistic truth. Language is, indeed, fully alive only on the living lip: that is, as *sound*. Verse, especially lyric poetry, is the form of utterance nearest to music, with which it was probably twin-born. Both are intended to arouse elemental passionate feeling, rather than calm logical thought.

The most popular poem of Poe, possibly the most famous lyric of our whole literature, is "The Raven." Despite his elaborate and mystifying account of its origin, it was probably an inevitable lyric confession. Indeed, one reason for the lasting popularity of this, rather than of any other poem by Poe, is that we do believe we understand it. It is entirely intelligible, if the chamber is the haunted heart, the raven remorse. The bird nearest of kin is the Promethean vulture, but the modern sufferer is self-condemned, and hopes for no rescuing Heracles.

And yet, the despair, however real, is here set to

Poe knew  
that verse  
is music.

music as masterly, as fitting, as elaborate as in any great sonata. The resources of our speech are exhausted in the quest for rhyme, assonance, and alliteration. Even the hissing letter *s*, that spoils so much of our English melody, is made effective in the

“Silken sad uncertain  
Rustling of each purple curtain.”

When this poem is first recited to a high-strung, imaginative child of ten, though he be ever so familiar with “Marmion,” or “Hiawatha,” or even Tennyson’s “Bugle Song,” he will dance with delight and cry, “Oh ! I didn’t know before that words could be used like that !” He will even *feel* the grawsome, lonely sadness of the finale, — long years may it be ere he truly understands it ! Every such incident is a signal triumph of fine art.

A poet of  
one mood :  
despair.

Far more literally than Bryant’s is Poe’s verse limited to a single mood ; for in Poe’s art that limit is also the bound of his own nature. He disdained, or was unable, to share the joys and sorrows of others, and so missed nearly all that is best in human life. “Ulalume” is in the same general key as “The Raven,” with the undertone of despair and horror less perfectly within artistic control. “The Bells” seems to have been begun in a calmer mood as a deliberate piece of art, but the fourth stanza surely came from a tortured and haunted soul. Occasionally, not often, Poe uses a touch of realism, not in itself grawsome, but only to heighten by contrast the sense of horror. So especially, in “The Sleeper,” the couplet : —

“Against whose portals she hath thrown,  
In childhood, many an idle stone.”

Even in single lines of Poe there is unearthly beauty and charm. The second stanza of "To Helen" can stand beside Keats's glimpse from his casement forth on perilous seas of fairyland. But if his poetry is to be seriously interpreted to children at all, we must begin with the very last lines in the volume, entitled "Alone," and make clear the utter morbidness and falsity, for any happy normal nature, of the last line.

Most of what has been said as to the thin volumes of poems could be repeated of the best among the many tales. The marvelous command of language as an appeal to the nerves, the mysterious music in the phrase, is there also. As Professor Wendell says, Poe's prose must be read aloud, to realize how true each cadence is. And it is into the same dim land of shadows and shadowy horrors that we step. The "House of Usher" stands close by the

"Dank tarn of Auber,"

"In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir,"

beside which we trembled in "Ulalume." Whether in the maelstrom, the balloon, or the madhouse, our guide is equally reassuring.

To be sure, the tales, as compared with the poems, were sometimes composed in relatively calm moods, sometimes too in an effort to hit the known tastes of a coy editor, at other times in mere petty willfulness and mischief. They are, therefore, less simple, intense, or subjective than the poems. In particular, the display of second-hand erudition is a trick which is at times worn threadbare; for, apart from an omnivorous reading, and retention, of the poetry of

passionate feeling, Poe's range of knowledge is superficial, and not remarkably wide. His power of solving "cryptograms" and kindred puzzles does really appear to have been preternaturally keen.

Prophetic keenness, as in early appreciation of Tennyson and Mrs. Browning, fierce jealousy, as in his assault on Longfellow for plagiarism from Poe himself, and the excessively narrow limitations of his artistic creed, are all revealed by this strange being in his literary criticism,—which was mostly wasted on contemporaries now utterly forgotten.

Instead of any steadfast development, this life is a tale of squandered genius, premature wreck, and utter ignominy at the close. There could hardly be imagined an environment in which the tale would have been a happy one. Indeed, Catullus, Heine, De Musset, Burns, Poe, and their kind, might half tempt us to think that the lyric poets of passion can learn only in bitterest remorse and suffering what they tell in song. Yet the prolonged, honored, spotless career of a Pindar or a Sophocles, of an Uhland or a Tennyson, is truer to the best possibilities of our common humanity. Even La Fontaine, Béranger, Hugo, with all their Gallie fire and vivacity, lived long and not unhappy lives.

A handful of Poe's poems, but little else, seems secure from the tooth of Time. As a master of phrasing, of rhythm, of the subtle harmonies of sound apart from the problem of their meaning, he owes remarkably little to any one, even to Coleridge, and has been surpassed perhaps by Swinburne only, of English lyrists. It is doubtful if Byron's personal excesses had any vital influence over Poe, whose physical

vices, indeed, appear to have been such as injured himself only. His literary work is remarkably clear of anything like coarse vulgarity or foul suggestion. He can hardly be said to have had disciples, unless indeed it be in France, though all artists in verse, and all story-tellers too who practice artful mystification, must study him as a master. Of technique, of the art of expression, he was a cunning master, like the "faultless painter" Andrea del Sarto; but like him, also, he had himself little truth to utter, for he had missed the best of life.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Poe is fortunate to have found, in the poet and interpretative critic, George E. Woodberry, as sympathetic a biographer and expositor as any healthy human nature with temperate blood is ever likely to prove. Professor Woodberry made thorough preparatory studies for the Life, in "*American Men of Letters*," and later, with Mr. Stedman, has completed the monumental edition of Poe's works. To his work, rather than to the errors and contradictions of previous authorities, reference must be made. Many willful falsehoods from Poe's own lips misled the earlier biographers, among whom was Mr. Lowell. A generous estimate of Poe by Mr. Mabie, printed a year or two ago in the *Atlantic*, may be preferred to the present rather hostile study.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM WORK

More than enough in this direction, perhaps, appears already in the text. "*The House of Usher*," "*The Gold-Bug*," "*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*," "*The Black Cat*," are among the most widely known of Poe's tales. "*Annabel Lee*" is possibly the poem least unsuited to childhood.

Lowell's verses on Poe in "*Fable for Critics*" should, of course, be read.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES — (1800–1830)

## 1800–1810

American History	American Literature
1801–1809. Presidency of Jefferson.	1801. Brockden Brown's "Edgar Huntley," "Clara Howard," "Jane Talbot." <i>New York Evening Post</i> founded.
1802. Ohio admitted as a state.	1804. Marshall's "Life of Washington."
1803. Louisiana purchased from France.	1805. Abiel Holmes's "American Annals."
1804. Expedition against Tripoli.	1807. Irving and Paulding, <i>Salmagundi Papers</i> .
1808. Foreign slave trade ceased by constitutional prohibition.	1808. Wm. Cullen Bryant (born 1794) published the "Embarго," and other poems.
1809–1817. Presidency of Madison.	1809. Irving's "Knickerbocker History."

## 1811–1820

1812–1815. Second War with England.	1812. Joel Barlow died.
1814. Capture of Washington by British.	1813. Paulding's "John Bull and Brother Jonathan."
1815. January, Battle of New Orleans.	1814. Key wrote "Star-Spangled Banner."
	1815. Mrs. Sigourney's "Moral Pieces."

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES — (1800–1830)

## 1800–1810

English and European Literature	English and European History
1801. Miss Edgeworth's Tales.	1801. Union of Great Britain and Ireland.
1802. Scott's "Minstrelsy of the Border."	1804–1815. Empire of Napoleon I.
1804. Schiller's "Wilhelm Tell."	1805. Battle of Trafalgar.
1805. Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel."	1806. Dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire.
1807. Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare."	1808–1814. Peninsular War.
Moore's Irish Melodies.	
1808. Scott's "Marmion."	
Goethe's "Faust," Part I.	
1809. Byron's "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers."	
Campbell's "Gertrude of Wyoming."	
1810. Scott's "Lady of the Lake."	

## 1811–1820

1811. Jane Austen's "Sense and Sensibility."	1812. Napoleon invades Russia.
Goethe's "Dichtung und Wahrheit."	1813. Defeat of French at Leipsic.
Shelley's "Necessity of Atheism."	1814. Abdication of Napoleon.
Niebuhr's "Roman History."	1815. Return of Napoleon from Elba.
1812. Byron's "Childe Harold."	Battle of Waterloo.
Landor's "Count Julian."	Napoleon taken to St. Helena.
Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice."	
1813. Byron's "Bride of Abydos."	
Shelley's "Queen Mab."	
1814. Byron's "Corsair."	
Scott's "Waverley."	
Wordsworth's "Excursion."	
1815. Scott's "Guy Mannering."	
Scott's "Lord of the Isles."	
1816. Scott's "Antiquary."	

1811-1820 — *Continued*

American History	American Literature
1817-1825. Presidency of Monroe. 1817. American Colonization Society.	1817. Bryant's "Thanatopsis" printed in the <i>North American Review</i> . Noah Webster's "Dictionary." Wirt's "Life of Patrick Henry."
1819. Florida purchased from Spain.	1818. Paulding's "Backwoodsman."
1820. Missouri Compromise.	1819. Irving's "Sketch-Book." Drake and Halleck published the "Croaker" poems. 1820. Cooper's "Precaution."
1821-1830	
1821. Mexico becomes independent. "Missouri Compromise." Slavery to be forever prohibited north of 36° 30' N.	1821. Bryant's Poems. Cooper's "Spy." R. H. Dana's "Idle Man."
1824. La Fayette revisits America. 1825-1829. J. Q. Adams's Presidency.	1822. Irving's "Bracebridge Hall." 1823. Cooper's "Pilot."
1826. Death of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.	1824. Mrs. Child's "Hobomok." 1825. Mrs. Child's "Rebels." June 17, Webster's Speech at Bunker Hill.
1829-1837. Jackson's Presidency.	1826. Cooper's "Last of the Mohicans." 1827. Cooper's "Red Rover and Prairie." Poe's "Tamerlane." R. H. Dana's "Buccaneer." 1827-1838. Audubon's "Birds of America." 1828. Hawthorne's "Fanshawe." Irving's "Columbus." 1829. Irving's "Granada." 1830. Cooper's "Waterwitch." Daniel Webster's Speeches against Hayne.

1811-1820 — *Continued*

English and European Literature	English and European History
1817. Keats's Poems. Moore's "Lalla Rookh." Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein."	
1818. Keats's "Endymion." Scott's "Rob Roy" and "Heart of Midlothian." Hallam's "Middle Ages."	
1819. Byron's "Don Juan." Shelley's "Cenci."	1819. Steamers cross the Atlantic.
1820. Keats's "St. Agnes" and "Hyperion." Scott's "Ivanhoe," "Mon- astery," "Abbot." Shelley's "Prometheus Un- bound."	1820. Death of George III.

## 1821-1830

1821. De Quincey's "Opium-Eater." Hazlitt's "Table Talk." Mill's "Political Economy." Scott's "Kenilworth," "Pi- rate." Shelley's "Adonais." Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister."	1821. Death of Napoleon.
1822. Lamb's "Elia." Roger's "Italy."	1822-1829. Greek war for indepen- dence.
1824. Landor's "Imaginary Con- versations." Miss Mitford's "Our Village."	
1825. Carlyle's "Schiller."	
1826. Mrs. Browning's early poems. Disraeli's "Vivian Gray."	
1826-1831. Heine's "Reisebilder."	
1827. Bulwer's "Pelham."	
De Quincey's "Murder as a Fine Art."	
Hallam's "Constitutional History."	
Hood's "Midsummer Fairies."	
A. and C. Tennyson's "Poems of Two Brothers."	
Heine's "Buch der Lieder."	
1830. Mrs. Hemans's "Songs of the Affections."	1830. Revolution in France. Bour- bons expelled.
Tennyson's "Poems, Chiefly Lyrical."	



## PART II

THE NEW ENGLAND PERIOD

(1830-1870)



## INTRODUCTION

### CULTURE AND SCHOLARSHIP IN THE EAST

**I**N our first group of creative artists, just discussed, the extreme East has been conspicuously absent. Perhaps the mellowing effect of time on the nature of the Puritans was especially slow in their chief stronghold and oldest American home. The loss of Franklin was undoubtedly very serious, and perhaps, humanly speaking, accidental. Bryant in his youth wavered between Boston and New York, and is indeed, despite his faithful half-century at his post in Manhattan, still counted by many, and with much reason, among the New England and Puritan poets. Whenever the proud story of New England is fully told, the lives of all such pilgrim sons must be included. Every younger state to the Westward has counted them as leaders among its men of action and of thought.

Meantime, the strenuous intellectual and moral life on Massachusetts Bay has continued unbroken. Harvard College has always been a center of serious scholarship; and if adequate breadth in scientific historical and linguistic studies has everywhere been but slowly attained, our oldest university has not a record, certainly, of timid conservatism. Indeed a suspicion that Harvard was dangerously "liberal" in its tendencies led, with other causes, to the very creation of her oldest rival, Yale, in 1701. Most of the

Revolutionary statesmen in New England were scholars, who were well read in ancient and modern history, and applied its lessons in the shaping of a new political organism.

But before the literary artist could freely breathe, it was doubtless necessary to break sharply with that traditional conception of man's nature and destiny which was indicated by Edwards's declaration that every child "is a viper, yea, far worse than a viper," or which consigns beforehand to eternal torture nine-tenths of the human race, including all infants unbaptized. Such a doctrine of original sin is probably not held, certainly not confidently taught, in our day, by any enlightened body of religious men.

William  
Ellery  
Channing,  
1780-1842.

And so we may now fairly regard William Ellery Channing, not as a storm center of sectarian strife, but simply as the most persuasive of many voices in a general and necessary intellectual movement. It was sorely against his own will that he ever became the leader of a sect; and indeed his own theological creed would now give him a decidedly conservative position, even within that "orthodox" church from which he parted.

The strenuous devotion of all energies and powers to what we believe to be duty is the very spirit of Puritanism, and it breathes in Channing, or Emerson, as in Vane or Edwards. The earlier and saner Puritanism, moreover, as Professor Jameson well reminds us, condemned nothing merely because it sweetened life. Its best artistic expression, Milton's poetry, opens the gates to the whole world of imagination, and the blitheness of "L'Allegro" and "Comus" offsets the more sober charm of "Il Penseroso" or

“Samson Agonistes.” It is no accident, therefore, that a famous essay of Channing is devoted to Milton, and another to the delights of literature in general.

Channing, more than any other man of his time, revealed by precept and example the happiness of serene, all-sided self-culture. He demanded absolute fearlessness in study and thought. He emphasized the dignity, the joyousness, of each human life. All real life is, of course, for him, that of the spirit; for Channing is as strenuous an idealist as Edwards himself. Nor is there anything selfish in his conception of duty. Indeed, his is one of the first and clearest voices raised against human slavery. In politics, in social life, Channing was an ardent and fearless reformer. Finally, to him, more than to any other man then living, the young Emerson stands in the position of a disciple. A surprisingly large number of our literary men have been in early life Unitarian clergymen. Perhaps the broad, humane scholarship of Channing has been best carried on in religious lines by James Freeman Clarke (1810–1888), while Frederic Henry Hedge (1805–1890) is now best remembered for his prominence in introducing German literature and philosophy.

Our typical “fresh-water” college of to-day, with its dozen fairly specialized scholarly instructors and a few thousand books, is modest enough, and yet it usually gives a most misleading and exaggerated idea as to the same institutions a century ago. Edwards hesitated to become president of Princeton, feeling “hardly competent to instruct the senior class in all

The old-fashioned college.

studies." Two professors and two tutors made a tolerable faculty then. Hebrew, Greek and Latin mostly patristic, logic, mathematics, were the staples. Modern languages, science, history, have run the gauntlet into the curriculum since, and English literature is just coming painfully to its proper heritage. But worst of all, every American college in 1800 was but an ill-conducted school, where boys must recite the lessons conned from text-books. The Harvard library seemed respectable to George Ticknor in boyhood, but when he returned from Göttingen he found it was but "a closetful of books." Of the larger university ether he and Everett brought us the first whiff.

George  
Ticknor,  
1791-1871.

Ticknor himself, son of a well-to-do ex-teacher and tradesman of Boston, was admitted to Dartmouth College at ten, after oral tests, at home, in Cicero and New Testament Greek. Graduating at sixteen after but two years' actual residence, with a tincture of Horace and astronomy in his memory, he acquired in the *next* three years, from an English-born clergyman of Boston, some real acquaintance with such recondite authors as Homer, Herodotus and Euripides, Livy and Tacitus. Madame de Staël's "Germany" told him of university life there. With much effort he secured a German dictionary from another state, borrowed a German grammar written in French, and discovered in the suburban village of Jamaica Plain an Alsatian who could give him a very faulty pronunciation. Such were the conditions at Harvard and in Boston, a decade after the deaths of Friedrich von Schiller and Christian Gottlob Heyne. Mastery of Hottentot with the clicks, or the native

speech of Samoa, could be more hopefully sought in Boston now.

Ticknor sailed for Europe in April, 1815. Four years later he returned, with the richest intellectual results of study and travel, and with a private library already large and costly. For many years he struggled, in vain, to have Harvard College remodeled on something like its present lines. His friend Edward Everett, alone, the brilliant young Greek professor, shared Ticknor's German scholarship and progressive ideas ; and he, after four years, was sent to Congress. Ticknor only, as the first Smith professor of modern languages (1820-1835), had a real departmental staff of instructors, a native German, an Italian, and a Frenchman. From his own nominal stipend of \$1000 he long drew only \$600, on account of the extreme poverty of the college.

Mr. Ticknor's town house and library was for a half-century, even during his own long visits abroad, the scholarly center of Boston (from which city Harvard has never been separable), perhaps, also, its strongest social bulwark. Among his friends and correspondents he counted the greatest foreign scholars, like Humboldt, and King John of Saxony, the learned student of Dante. Ticknor himself was not a source of direct inspiration as a great teacher, orator, or creative writer, but many such men valued his influence. He was a wide-ranging and accurate student all his life. His "History of Spanish Literature" (1849) is still the exhaustive and authoritative work on the subject, though anything but a readable or stimulating book for laymen. His "Life of Prescott" gives us a pleasant acquaintance with the biogra-

pher as well, though both maintain their punctilious dignity and Bostonian manners.

That Ticknor's tendencies, save in pure scholarship and educational reform, were conservative, aristocratic, exclusive, is not strange. He and his class were held closely bound by their material interests and social creed. The fast-growing wealth of Boston was heavily invested in the mills on the Merrimac. The South, rather than the West, then furnished the chief market. Even men who deplored the existence of slavery — as nearly all men did — might cling to the Union, and to the constitutional recognition of slaveholding, as a bargain fairly entered into and irrevocable.

So when the most promising of young Boston aristocrats, like Phillips, became an Abolitionist, or even a Free-Soil revolter from the dominant Whig party, like Sumner, Ticknor's door was slammed in his face, and nearly all "the four hundred," of course, imitated the example. When, from the days of Tiberius Graecchus to Henry George, has vested wealth welcomed revolutionary doctrines, or petted their expounders? Far more bitterly did the older "orthodox" Unitarianism denounce the radical free religionist, Theodore Parker, as "an atheist in the pulpit," a fit ally for incendiary traitors like Garrison. Professor Wendell is quite right in arguing that all this was not merely excusable or rational, but really inevitable. Though "Humanity sweeps onward," the cautious conservative has his peculiar virtues and uses.

It is important to remember that Emerson and the younger creative writers generally were openly fol-

lowing, though with feet less heavily shod, in the same paths with Garrison and Parker. Channing himself did not live long enough to grow the hard shell of real conservatism. On the other hand, such men as Felton, the great Greek professor, an old and intimate friend of Sumner, denounced his radical polities, and finally even broke off personal relations, far more hotly than Ticknor. The latter acted from calm, lifelong principle. That his own political social and religious creed was absolutely right, he knew as surely as Winthrop or Mather.

In truth, not merely the conservatism of property generally, but the very spirit of scholarship itself, is often at war with the creative imagination. The scholar lives, by his own choice, in the past; the poet rather in his ideal, even if unattainable, future. So the scholar craves permanence, while the freer vision of the dreamer bids him hope, if not fight, for radically better conditions of life.

These two powers are oftener not united, in large measure, in the same person. Encyclopaedic learning weighs down the wingèd soul too heavily. Books abused, says Emerson, are among the worst of things. "Meek young men in libraries" forget, he adds, that they to whom they make submission were themselves but bolder and more self-centered youths. William D. Whitney or Justin Winsor could have made a crushing retort, by describing the chronic inaccuracy of dreamers. Certainly Emerson himself was quite unfit for sustained investigation and scholarly accuracy, though he could admire, in more tolerant moods, even the bookworm.

Lowell, it is true, did combine tireless energy as a

Conserv-a-tism of scholarship.

reader, an omnivorous memory, and reflective analytical criticism, with the poet's imagination. Doubtless the critic profited by the partnership, but the poet often, even in old age, complains bitterly that arduous study has dried up the creative sources. His poetry might have been largely the gainer, if he, like Longfellow, could have quietly sought, and enjoyed, whatever sustenance his imagination craved, or even had he been often secluded for years in village or fields, with little comradeship save his own wide-ranging thoughts.

But the poet and the scholar, creator and preserver of our literary wealth, have need of each other ; and the truly civilized community itself needs alike the poet and the scholar, the uplift toward better things to strive for, the full consciousness of all the treasured experience and thought garnered from the centuries since Homer or the Vedic hymns.

Ticknor first made liberal scholarship possible in an American college. In later life he lent his costly books, with utmost liberality, to every serious student. He, more than any other man, labored to found the Free Public Library of Boston, the oldest and the best of its kind. To that library he bequeathed his own collection of Spanish books, said to be still the richest in the world, outside of Spain itself.

Ticknor's name must be written, perhaps larger than any other, among the creators of a wide and deep literary culture, who are surely, in the long run, among the godfathers of later literature as well. This truth is indeed demonstrable in his case. Emerson or Thoreau, though each owes much in detail

to older authors, could indeed be essentially himself in his sylvan home. But Longfellow's world-wide humanism and Prescott's fine literary style were vitally indebted to George Ticknor, and to the new culture which his name best represents. They breathed naturally, all their lives, the air of the "alcoved tomb," as Dr. Holmes calls the library. These two are but the most famous among Ticknor's many friends.

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"Life" by William H. Channing, Boston, 1848.

Ticknor's "History of Spanish Literature," three volumes, New York, 1849. "Life, Letters, and Journals," edited by his daughter, two volumes, Boston, 1876.

The remark of Professor J. F. Jameson alluded to on p. 114 is in his excellent monograph on "Historical Writing in America."

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASS WORK

The best sketches of Ticknor's Boston will be found in Pierce's "Life of Charles Sumner," Vol. II, and, especially, Vol. III, *ad init.* If the attempt is made to interest young students in such a subject, a limited use of names, and a generous use of views, portraits, anecdotes, etc., is desirable.

The social dictation, and, if need were, ostracism, exercised by Ticknor, is defended in a characteristic letter of his, in Pierce's "Sumner," Vol. III. The serene self-confidence of its moral judgments makes this epistle a capital index of Puritanic character.

Ralph  
Waldo  
Emerson,  
1803-1882.

## CHAPTER I

### THE CONCORD GROUP

#### I. EMERSON

RALPH WALDO EMERSON traced his descent through seven generations of Puritan preachers. He had every right to a place, then, in that "Brahmin caste," the intellectual aristocracy of New England as it is characterized by Dr. Holmes. His father preached in the oldest of the Boston churches down to his early death in 1811. He too, like nearly all the educated men of his generation, shared in the liberal tendencies which Channing best represents. There was very little controversial theology in his sermons, and in general he foreshadowed the tendencies of his greater son. He edited from 1805 till his death the *Literary Anthology*, then the modest organ of literary and liberal Boston ; for the *North American Review* was not founded until 1815.

Those who believe in the decisive power of heredity, or of personal influence either, should read a most striking utterance of ecstatic idealism, written by Mary Moody Emerson, when her famous nephew was four years old. It is quoted by Mr. Emerson in the *Atlantic* for December, 1883, and certainly could well stand as a page of his own "Nature." Even the rhythmic pulse of his prose is here : "We measure duration by the number of our thoughts, by the

activity of reason, the discovery of truths, the acquirement of virtue, the approval of God."

Poverty was among Emerson's earliest teachers. His father's death left a delicate widow with five little boys,—Ralph Waldo being the second,—and hardly any income. She moved out of the parsonage, and took boarders. The boy Emerson used to drive their cow to pasture on the Common: a lively glimpse of the changes in that part of Boston. For many years the family were quietly aided by the dead father's friends.

Emerson was educated at the Latin School, and graduated at Harvard in 1821. He made no great record of scholarship there, and though chosen class poet, it was after seven others had declined the honor. Nor does he express enthusiasm for any of his instructors, as such, though before he graduated Edward Everett was teaching Greek, and George Ticknor, first of the three famous Smith professors, had charge of the modern languages. These men had brought back from Europe something of the true university spirit. The chair of rhetoric and oratory was already filled by Edward Tyrrel Channing, brother of the great preacher, who in his long service (1819–1851) is said to have "taught a whole generation of American authors how to write." *His* tasks Emerson performed with interest. Doubtless the youthful Emerson was himself the stripling who, as he writes long after, would console his defeats in mathematics "with Chaucer and Montaigne, with Plutarch and Plato, at night." Shakespeare he knew almost by heart. Webster's oratory set his pulses throbbing. German philosophy and literature were

Emerson at  
Harvard.

coming into the reach of eager minds, but did not interest Emerson especially until he met Carlyle. Such natures as his find their own fittest sustenance in spite of all teachers or curricula. Already he was notably quiet, self-contained, dwelling apart.

In college Emerson had taken scholarships, and earned money by private pupils. Later he alternated with his studies in Divinity some unhappy but successful school-teaching. A keen-eyed boy later recalled him as "a captive philosopher set to tending flocks, resigned but not amused."

At this time he was aiding unselfishly in bringing up his brothers. All were of sensitive constitutions. The winter of 1827-1828 Waldo was obliged to spend in St. Augustine. Here as elsewhere he kept journals of his sights, studies, and meditations, not rarely in verse. His correspondence with his Aunt Mary was a part of his education.

In 1829 he was ordained as assistant pastor in a Boston church, and married. Early in 1832 he lost his wife, and later in the year retired from the ministry. His final sermon is the only one that has been published, the other rather mild discourses not being, in his opinion, worth preservation; and having been freely utilized, we may add, in his lectures and printed essays.

It would not be easy to find a calmer, or a more audacious, utterance than this last sermon. It discusses the rite which all shades of Christians have through the centuries held most sacred: the communion. His own belief was, that the command, "This do in remembrance of me," was addressed to the apostles actually present, and to them alone.

He had proposed to his people a substitute, which had been unanimously rejected. He could not honestly continue the service. His final words were : "That is the end of my opposition, that I am not interested in it. I am content that it stand to the end of the world, if it please men and please Heaven, and I shall rejoice in all the good it produces."

Emerson  
steps out-  
side the  
Christian  
Church.

For Emerson, that was always the end. Whenever he felt "cabin'd, cribb'd, confined," he opened the door and stepped out. His needs were of the simplest, and he never doubted that they would be supplied. Absolute sincerity and single-hearted quest of truth were the first of needs. Such honesty in word and act

"He taught, but first he folwed it himself."

At thirty, he faced without dismay what seemed total failure in the only work for which he had felt any calling or capacity. Doubly bereft of pulpit and helpmeet, he must have felt the need of restful change.

In 1833-1834 Emerson made a first visit in Europe, chiefly in England, with a short tour through Sicily, Italy, and France. He met the men he had most desired to see, Wordsworth, Landor, De Quincey, Coleridge, and in particular Carlyle. The student should turn at once to the opening chapter of "English Traits," which is, be it said, incidentally, quite the easiest of all his books for the exoteric reader. The merciless description of Wordsworth is a revelation of critical insight in the younger seer.

The friendship with the choleric Carlyle was a rather grotesque one, but lasted till death. It

Carlyle  
and  
Emerson.

hardly needs Lowell's vigorous words, in "Fable for Critics," to differentiate the two men. Their method and spirit, at least, were as diverse as the wind and the sun of Æsop, inducing the wayfarer to throw off his cloak. Carlyle hated and denounced shams. Emerson loved and serenely sought the beautiful and the true. If the Scotchman had accepted a later invitation to come over and conduct the *Dial* — Their long correspondence has been carefully edited by Professor Norton.

Emerson preached in Edinburgh, doubtless elsewhere, during his absence. Until 1838 he even preached regularly in East Lexington to "a very simple people who could understand no one else," but he refused their formal call. He said early, "My pulpit is the Lyceum platform."

The New  
England  
Lyceum.

This "Yankee notion," the New England Lyceum, is now little but a memory of ante-bellum days. The lack of books, magazines, and live newspapers fostered a hunger such as we can no longer realize. Like everything else, the Puritan lecture-course system was taken very seriously. These winter courses were regarded as an essential part of a liberal education. The lecturer was preacher, teacher, political and social leader, in one. Emerson, a pioneer in this field, lectured in 1834 on Michael Angelo, Milton, Luther, George Fox, and Burke.

The leading Lyceum speakers of the next thirty years were also usually the chief scholars, authors, and orators of the East. Naturally, the platform early became an engine of strenuous "reform" of many sorts, and it is only our word "crank" that is new, not the genus. Just before the war, Abolitionism domi-

nated the Lyceum. Later, a more sated or less robust generation began to require amusement, and finally the professional fun-maker wrecked the dignity of the institution. Yet every New Englander now past middle age counts even a far-away memory of Emerson the lecturer, and his successors, down to Whipple and Curtis, among the chief sources of lasting inspiration.

The same year, 1834, Emerson settled in Concord, sharing the Old Manse with his grandmother's husband, the venerable Dr. Ezra Ripley, who was perhaps the last immovable pillar of the old Puritanism. Emerson's loving sketch of him (*Atlantic*, November, 1883) does equal honor to both.

Ezra Ripley,  
1751-1841.

L.C.

Concord was Emerson's home until his death. There Hawthorne, Thoreau, the Alcotts, and others lived, and now lie buried; but as the home of Emerson Concord will be known above all else. No spot could be more satisfying to the pilgrim, whatever his previous fancies about it. Peace seems to linger about its famous homes, and surely about the beautiful "God's acre" in Sleepy Hollow. The memories of two centuries are best united, however, where we look across the swift quiet river to see, at the bridge head, the monument of the first fight in the Revolution, inscribed with Emerson's most famous quatrain.

The palmers began to come to the sage's door, by the way, abundantly, even in Emerson's own time. Hawthorne sketches this procession of "young visionaries and gray-headed theorists" in that wonderful piece of idealized realism, the description of Concord and the Manse at the beginning of his "Mosses,"

Concord the  
Mecca of  
dreamers.

to which the student should by all means turn at once.

The year 1835 was still more decisive in the philosopher's outward life. He married Lydia Jackson of Plymouth. They moved into the house in which their children were born, in which both parents died, and which is still the abode of the purest refinement and altruism.

The same month he gave the oration at the 200th anniversary of the town's settlement. This address, as published, is a sober, plain statement of facts, with abundant footnotes, such as a local antiquarian puts together. Emerson could be, and was at will, to the end of his days, a plain, shrewd village neighbor, a regular attendant at town meeting, as full of unmystical "common sense" as Franklin himself, to whom, indeed, he is likened often by those who knew him best.

For April 19 of the next year he rendered a more famous local service. His hymn, sung at the dedication of the monument, made such an impression, that it almost seemed that it was he who had

"Fired the shot heard round the world."

Here again there was no hint of mysticism.

And yet his first book, "Nature," had already been written in the Old Manse. Published anonymously, it was promptly credited to Emerson. It sold, in twelve years, only five hundred copies. The soul of the poet and seer is in the little book. Nearly all his later utterances are there suggested, as when the phrase, "Nothing is quite beautiful alone," fore-shadows one of his most perfect lyric poems, "Each

"Nature,"  
published  
1836.

and All." The book is a poetic rhapsody, more poetical by far as a whole, even though not written in verse, than Wordsworth's "Excursion." "Nature" is, to Emerson, the whole environment of man, and the central thought of this work is the perfect harmony that should be felt between the human being and that environment.

Curiously enough, Emerson does not seem to be aware that the word *Nature* itself, by its origin and by Lucretius's use of it, means properly birth, or origin, so implying in itself development. Yet, long before Darwin, in the next edition of this book after the first, there are prefixed the famous verses, foreshadowing so clearly the chief dogma of modern science :—

"A chain of countless rings  
The next unto the farthest brings; . . .  
And striving to be man, the worm  
Mounts through all the spires of form."

The little book puzzled, and in part shocked, most of the few critics who then noticed it. It can hardly be defended from the rather vague charge of Pantheism. Nature certainly is, to Emerson, not a veil between himself and God, but the manifold expression, or emanation, of divinity itself.

The clear final note is optimistic. Man is sufficient to his own salvation. Progress, and nothing else, is necessary to ever fuller human happiness. Evil is but misdirected good. "The advancing spirit. . . shall draw beautiful faces, warm hearts, wise discourse, and heroic acts, around its way, until evil is no more seen."

Even if the reader is able to share in full Emerson's

complete emancipation from religious tradition and dogma of every sort, he may still find this alluring little book anything but easy reading. Like the forest itself, it often seems to open unending vistas and bypaths, rather than to close in and complete any view. Indeed, the subject itself is as boundless as interstellar space. But every man must at least find much truth, beauty, and inspiration, in golden phrases scattered over every page, while a fitting hour and mood may, at any time, give us the key to the entire rhapsody, so that we can exultantly cry, in Emerson's own words:—

“Beauty into my senses stole:  
I yielded myself to the perfect whole.”

Φ B K  
oration,  
August 31,  
1837.

The most striking public appearance of Emerson was before the Harvard Phi Beta Kappa society in 1837, when he delivered an oration on “The American Scholar.” This bears by general consent the title of our intellectual Declaration of Independence. Lowell, who was present, recalls the scene vividly in his essay on Thoreau. Next year Mr. Emerson aroused much feeling by his radical Divinity School address, in which he emphasized the purely human nature of Christ, and the absurdity of a miracle, if understood as an actual violation of natural law.

In the resulting discussion he made this remark, in a letter to his former colleague, the Rev. Dr. Ware: “I do not know what arguments are. I delight in telling what I think; but if you ask me how I dare say so, or why it is so, I am the most helpless of mortal men.” This is absolutely true. There are few links of argument in Emerson's works. He has

the spirit of a poet always. What interests him he sees clearly, and describes vividly; that is all. Hence he has founded no school of thought, taught no doctrines; but more than any other man of the nineteenth century he stimulated and encouraged all Americans to unfettered thought and fearless utterance. Lowell, who least of men would wear any master's yoke, pays most loyal tribute to this benignant influence in "Emerson the Lecturer."

Yet Emerson has been regarded, in spite of himself, as the leader, or center, of the Transcendental school. That name was given in derision, doubtless, though it would be hard to say when, or where. Lowell, in the opening pages of his essay on Thoreau, gives a mercilessly witty and satirical description of this famous group. Emerson himself, in his "Historic Notes," makes a very different sketch. They were simply a coterie of the most advanced radicals, in an age of general ferment. The "Club" began in a chance gathering of four or five young Unitarian clergymen, and never acquired any organization at all. Goethe, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Channing, Emerson himself, were among the disturbing influences. "I unsettle all things," says Emerson. "No facts are to me sacred; none are profane." Everything was open for freest discussion. Visionary schemes for the complete and immediate regeneration of society were, naturally, in the air.

The most famous experiment actually made was that in coöperative farming, joint housekeeping, rational education, and mutual improvement, at Brook Farm, in Roxbury, in the years 1840-1847. There will be more to say of this in connection with

The Transcendentalist Club,  
1836.

Brook Farm,  
1840-1847.

Hawthorne. Emerson's shrewd Yankee sense, and doubtless too, his happy home life in Concord, kept him entirely aloof financially from this project. It ended disastrously at last, partly on account of the loss of the chief building by fire, but without scandal of any kind. Many of the younger members always looked back upon it as an ideal form of education.

The *Dial*,  
1841-1844.

During the same years in part (1841-1844), the famous *Dial*, in some sort the organ of the Transcendentalists, was edited by Margaret Fuller, and afterward by Emerson. His prose and poetry are its most valuable contents. This also failed to support itself. A remarkably lucid grouping of its chief contributors and contents is given by Professor Wendell (pp. 302-304).

Emerson had lost, in 1834 and 1836, two of his brothers, who shared his genius in large measure. But the heaviest shock his self-centered optimistic faith received was the sudden death, in 1842, of his son and eldest child, Waldo, really a marvelous boy, in his sixth year. The poem "Threnody" is a most tender, pathetic, and intimate utterance. We feel the heart-throbs as in no other of his verses. The fact that such an utterance was actually in rhyme strengthens our belief that Emerson was at heart a poet, lacking only, as he says of Plato, the lyric form, if even that.

In 1847-1849 he was again in England, and had great success as a lecturer, chiefly with a series of papers afterward published as "Representative Men." In this book he comes nearest to full sympathy with the author of "Heroes and Hero Worship"; but while

Carlyle glories in the force of a great man for itself, Emerson always seeks the eternal Idea behind all.

With the exception of this English visit, Emerson's life glided on uneventfully. He lived simply, earned more than he spent, and was at ease. He lectured every winter, and from time to time put forth a volume of essays, though by no means all his manuscripts have ever been printed. In Concord itself he gave first and last more than a hundred lectures, many of which are still unpublished. His poems accumulated much more slowly, and the two collections make but a single light volume in the final editions of his works.

He was not accounted a man of action, especially not a political agitator nor urger of immediate reforms. Thus he held somewhat aloof from the anti-slavery propaganda, though he expressed sympathy for Sumner when he was assailed, and for John Brown in 1859. He had borne testimony against slavery itself, in remarkably plain and forcible language, in an address on emancipation in the West Indies as early as 1844. He condemned the Fugitive Slave Law. His single sentence in a frustrated speech on Daniel Webster is as fierce as Whittier's "Ichabod": "There is not a drop of blood in this man's veins which does not look downward." In 1855, he made the proposal, in an antislavery speech, that all the slaves be purchased, at an estimated cost of two billion dollars. Most men will now agree that it was a rational and economical plan. In the same year he spoke once for the right of women to vote.

"English Traits" was not published until 1856.

Despite much hearty admiration, the keen, unbarbed arrows of this book struck deep into the nerves of our insular cousins. The passage beginning "Twenty thousand thieves landed at Hastings" is terrific in its plainness. In this one venture he may be compared with Hawthorne, whose book, "Our Old Home," hit much the same tender spot.

Even the Civil War hardly distracted Emerson from his wonted tasks. He welcomed the Emancipation Proclamation. Again, when Lincoln died, he spoke wisely and generously of his character, to his Concord neighbors, April 19, 1865. His poem, "Voluntaries" (1863), reveals that it is written in war time. Perhaps, as we saw in Bryant's case, that bitter stress gave us the poet's noblest quatrain:—

"So nigh is grandeur to our dust,  
    So near is God to man,  
When Duty whispers low, *Thou must,*  
    The youth replies, *I can.*"

The verses, "Terminus," in 1867, announce serenely the approach of age. Lowell, years after, feeling himself too growing old, and uttering his loyal gratitude for lifelong inspiration, quoted most gracefully to Emerson: "I at least gladly

"Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime."

Indeed, such quatrains as that just cited, and the famous one in "Wood Notes," beginning,—

"Thou canst not wave thy staff in air,"

may well make us hesitate to agree with Mr. Lowell, that the master had no ear for rhythm and music in verse, and produced his occasional happy effects almost by chance.

Emerson's memory and power of utterance faded painlessly away in his latter years. Though present at Longfellow's funeral, where he whispered once to his devoted attendant, "Who is the sleeper?" he awoke as from a trance at nightfall, sadly aware that he had missed the day. Soon after he contracted pneumonia, and only a month later he himself fell on sleep.

It has been attempted to make clear the spirit of Emerson's work, even while telling the quiet story of his life. The gentle simplicity of the man, his unswerving faith in humanity, in Nature, in the unseen Powers that guide the universe, must count for more than any mere piece of literary art he has left behind him. He certainly created no philosophic system, perhaps taught no absolutely novel truth. He had literally no dramatic power, or large constructive imagination. His utterance is always direct and personal, as it were in his own calm, natural voice.

His essays are not only without rigid logical cohesion, they are often mere loose series of more or less kindred thoughts, and at times justify the extravagant legends which are current as to their haphazard growth. He has no painful or scholastic accuracy. He quotes or refers offhand to authors of all ages, with some of whom he had but nodding acquaintance. Least of all men would he desire his own books to be studied critically and accepted as authoritative.

On his artistic side, then, he is lyric only, and even that, almost always, in briefest flights. As his rhythmic prose hardly suffers when quoted in the

single detached sentence, or by the paragraph at most, so his verse rarely sustains itself masterfully beyond a dozen lines. A few striking exceptions, indeed, to this assertion, like "Each and All" and "Terminus," have been noted. Emerson's own favorite among his poems was "Days." It chances that we can set beside this the same thought in its earlier prose expression. The two will convince any appreciative reader of his full right to use the poetic forms.

"The days are ever divine, as to the first Aryans. They come and go like muffled and veiled figures, sent from a distant friendly party; but they say nothing, and if we do not use the gifts they bring, they carry them as silently away."

—*Works and Days.*

#### DAYS

"Daughters of Time, the hypocritic days,  
Muffled and dumb, like barefoot dervishes,  
And marching single in an endless file,  
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.  
To each they offer gifts after his will,  
Bread, kingdom, stars, and sky that holds them all.  
I, in my pleachèd garden, watched the pomp,  
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily  
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day  
Turned and departed silent. I too late  
Under the solemn fillet saw the scorn."

As Dr. Holmes points out, here and elsewhere Mr. Emerson is far more subjective in verse than in prose. Indeed, he frankly confesses his own feelings and failings in his poetry, while he has a certain aristocratic reticence about himself at all other times.

Emerson's verse is usually as cold as Bryant's, and far below his, not to mention Poe's, in metrical and

structural finish. On the other hand, in actual range of thought, and even of fancy, he is altogether superior to them both. Indeed, a certain demiurgic originality and audacious independence of all traditional models has placed Emerson's poetry, in the judgment of many critics, quite apart from that of all other men.

But the true legacy of Ralph Waldo Emerson is in the freer, purer air that all men breathe who have come within his influence. Dean Stanley reported that in America "the genial atmosphere which Emerson has done so much to promote is shared by all the churches equally." The good dean spoke then for the "Evangelical" bodies; but freedom is wider still.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The works of Emerson are published by Houghton, Mifflin, & Co. The three most important memoirs are the official biography by his literary executor, J. E. Cabot, the volume of reminiscences by his son, Edward Waldo Emerson, and the Life in "American Men of Letters" by Dr. Holmes. Of critical writing on Emerson there is no end. We should begin with Lowell's loyal tribute. Matthew Arnold's paper on Emerson is important, and there is an excellent German study of him by Hermann Grimm. The latest and most iconoclastic essay is by J. J. Chapman. The best technical criticism of his literary style is in Dr. Holmes's book. Mr. Cabot has, in an important appendix, a list of all Emerson's works, with abstracts of those not published.

#### CLASSROOM WORK

A number of Emerson's poems are easier reading than any of his prose. Besides those mentioned in the text, most of "The Problem," of "Wood Notes I," and of "Mayday" can be simply enjoyed. Many brief poems, like "Rhodora," "Suum Cuique," "Compensation," "Forbearance," should be learned

by heart. "Forerunners" should be compared with Whittier's "Vanishers" and Lowell's "Envoi to the Muse." The approach to Emerson's prose is not wholly easy. "Manners" and "Wealth," in "Conduct of Life," are clear enough. Perhaps a fully characteristic paper, like "Compensation," is really better, even for a first plunge. Abundant pictures for an illustrated lecture on Concord are very easily obtainable.

## II. HENRY D. THOREAU

Henry  
David  
Thoreau,  
1817-1862.

There are certain other men and women so associated with Mr. Emerson that they are almost always mentioned as his disciples, though they are rather members, with him, of a local Concord group. Of course every such individual, if worth discussing at all, is interesting chiefly for his originality, not for his loyalty to Emerson. In particular is this true of the comparatively brief, but sturdily contented, life of Thoreau. He was unduly overshadowed in life by his great friend's fame; and Mr. Lowell, in particular, always strong in his dislikes, and always vigorous and convincing in utterance, said some most unfair things about him.

Though French on one side and Quaker on the other, Thoreau himself was a stubborn, opinionated, native-born Yankee. A near neighbor of the Emersons, he had doubtless driven *his* mother's cow home by their gate. Though his native Concord was then but a village of two thousand souls,—since doubled in number,—it had a good classical academy, and the boy was well fitted for Harvard, where he graduated in 1837, having worked his way in part by teaching. That same year Mr. Emerson sought his friendship, being first drawn to the youth because he had heard of a striking

coincidence between a passage in Thoreau's diary and his own last lecture. For two years, 1841–1843, he lived under Mr. Emerson's roof. He never married.

Besides teaching, lecturing, and authorship, Thoreau worked industriously and skillfully, at times, at the family employment of making lead pencils. How small his own actual needs and outgo were he has told us plainly in his favorite book, "Walden." His famous hut on the shore of the lake was upon Emerson's land. He built it in the spring of 1845 and used it only two years. It was simply an outdoor study, where he lived among woodland sights and sounds, while writing his books. There was no pretense of being a hermit. His friends—the poet Channing, Alcott, and others—visited him there freely, and he walked in to the village almost daily. This particular episode has been absurdly exaggerated in some accounts of Thoreau's life.

An unsocial student, but no hermit.

Nevertheless it is true, that he had a rather unsocial nature. He went to "the god of the woods" not merely, like Emerson, to fetch his words to men, but because he decidedly preferred solitude to society, for the most part. Social conventions, artificial needs, were to him a weary waste of precious time. It is also true that he was more deeply influenced by Emerson than by any other one man. But the very precepts of the master united with Thoreau's own instincts to make him the most independent and self-poised of mortals. Emerson had actually written in 1841 advocating a "house of one room": though his own was ampler.

Moreover, while much wider in his range of

thoughts, or at least of speculations. Emerson was altogether the pupil, not the master, in Thoreau's proper classroom, the woods and fields. "Thoreau," as Dr. Holmes finely says, "lent him a new set of organs of sense, of wonderful delicacy. Emerson's long intimacy with him taught him to give an outline to many natural objects which would have been poetic nebulae to him, but for this companionship." Compare Emerson's own testimony in his brief biography of his friend. "Mayday," again, written after Thoreau's influence came, has a definiteness of vision not felt in "Wood Notes," which was actually written before they met, though nearly all readers feel that the

"forest seer,  
The minstrel of the natural year,"

must be a portrait of Thoreau.

The younger philosopher was also, as Emerson was not, a devoted classical student, especially of Greek drama and lyrie. He made translations of two Aeschylean plays, and of passages from Pindar. Many evidences of this rare scholarship appear in his works.

Thoreau's life at Walden may perhaps most fairly be regarded as a Brook Farm experiment in miniature : a half-successful attempt, or an interesting failure of an attempt, to create a congenial self-supporting "social unit," not unduly isolated from mankind in general, and more than willing to impart to outsiders any fruitful results from the undertaking. Thoreau's ideal community was : himself alone. The attempt had, at any rate, no such semitragical absurdity as Aleott's, from which he and his few disciples were rescued in a starving condition.

It is curious that Emerson apparently failed to realize, adequately, how exactly in accord with his own teachings all this sturdy contented activity of Thoreau's was. How permanent and precious its fruits were to be he perhaps could not be expected to divine. He is said to have complained that "Henry" had no ambition.

His whole life through Thoreau jotted down in his journals—not indeed many visions and aspirations for the Infinite, but—a record of sights and sounds in his own familiar yet undiscovered New England world. He lived on such terms with his neighbors that he could lift the fish from the lake, the wood-chuck from his hole, with his hand, and restore them unterrified to freedom again. When he left the woods and lakes of his own region, it was by choice for the forests of Maine, or the sandy stretches of Cape Cod. Nearly all his published works, and there are now some ten volumes, are but sections of that detailed daily record. Only two books were printed in his lifetime. The first one, in 1849, involved him in serious debt, and nearly the whole edition came back upon his hands some years later. It probably never occurred to him to be thereby dismayed, or diverted from his natural employments.

Friend of  
all the  
forest world.

And now, alone of Emerson's personal group, Thoreau is every year becoming more widely known and beloved. He may be said, also, to have a long line of disciples, from John Burroughs down to the youth of to-day, who has learned first from him, as Colonel Higginson says he did, to bring a bird nearer with a spyglass instead of with a gun. He alone has taken an honored place beside, yet apart

from, Emerson himself, among the authors whom the world cannot now spare, and apparently will not soon suffer to be forgotten. Indeed, if we take but ten books to our summer camp, "Walden" is more secure of a place than Emerson's "Nature" itself. There is furthermore a goodly group of living writers, still headed by genial and happy John Burroughs, and occupying toward Thoreau the position of independent but grateful disciples. Even Lowell does homage to his keen and unerring outdoor eyesight.

Thoreau the  
head of the  
Out-of-doors  
School.

Thoreau wrote his poetry almost wholly before he was thirty. It is embedded, usually in the form of mere couplets or quatrains, in his voluminous journals, as we may see occasionally in the "Concord and Merrimac." Much of it he later destroyed, on Mr. Emerson's judgment rather than his own. Together with the philosopher's inability to approve or read his neighbor Hawthorne's masterpieces, this casts grave doubts on Emerson's infallibility in literary criticism at short range.

A separate volume of fifty short "Poems of Nature" has recently been put together. The title is apt, but still wiser the editors' instinct, not to try to detach the yet briefer bits from their prose environment in his journals. Thoreau simply turns to rhythmical utterance, for the instant, when the tone of his thought requires it. Like Emerson, he is often more confidential and personal in verse. Occasionally he is mystical, though usually direct enough. Rhyme he cannot always command easily, though we welcome eagerly such gems as:—

"I hearing get, who had but ears,  
And sight, who had but eyes before,  
I moments live who lived but years,  
And truth discern, who knew but learning's lore."

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers coyly still. Truth-seekers are we all. Contentment with little, devotion to simple living and high-ranging thought, comradeship with all animate things, deep insight into the eternal processes of nature, together with full enjoyment of philosophy and poetry in books,—so much, at least, this Yankee recluse learned, and teaches to an ever widening circle.

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The goodly row of Thoreau's books is published by Houghton. A remarkably fine edition of "Cape Cod" contains hundreds of delicately tinted marginal sketches, reproduced from the water-color work of a faithful follower. The separate volume, "Poems of Nature," is hardly indispensable, since his verse is best understood as read *in situ* in his other books.

Frank Sanborn calls Channing's "Life of Thoreau" "a mine" of things "relevant and irrelevant": and his own, in "Men of Letters," could be called "Concord gossip, often mentioning Thoreau." Still, he is always interesting. Emerson's brief sketch of Thoreau, now included in the latter's collected works, Vol. X, sets him unmistakably before us. Lowell's essay is indispensable, but exasperating. See also appreciations by R. L. Stevenson, Burroughs, and Page.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASS WORK

No books can be put more securely into young hands than Thoreau's. Like Bryant, he should be read out of doors. He is intensely local also, and a pilgrimage to Concord, with views of its quieter nooks, will bring him constantly to the lips. Walden Pond, in particular, is forever his.

## III. MARGARET FULLER

Margaret  
(Fuller)  
Ossoli,  
1810-1850.

A strenuous  
girlhood.

Strangely contrasted with Thoreau's posthumous fame is the fact, that her own tragic death, and the discussion over a character in a romance, now barely keep alive in the popular mind the very name of Margaret Fuller, the imperious friend of Emerson, the editor, perhaps the real founder, of the *Dial*, the best-loved and best-hated woman of her day. She was born in Cambridge, of a self-assertive race, herself the most self-confident and ardently ambitious of women. Her father himself started her in the precocious classical training then common for boys, unheard-of for girls. Latin, begun at six, recited in irregular evening hours, wrecked her bodily vigor for life, as she afterward believed. French, philosophy, Greek, Italian, were on her daily programme at midsummer, when she was fifteen. German literature and philosophy came very early and powerfully into her inner life, through her friendship with Dr. Frederick Hedge. Her father removed to Groton in 1833, and died suddenly in 1835.

Margaret's struggle to educate the younger children was now doubly severe. She had to leave home and teach, first in Alcott's famous Boston school, and, after his first mishap, in Providence. Hedge praised her to the Emersons, and in July, 1836, she made her first visit in their Concord home, recorded by Emerson in a famous passage. She was at first "a not unfear'd, half-welcome guest." He learned to value highly his ardent and critical friend. A bold and delightful letter to him is quoted by her chivalric biographer, Colonel Higginson (pp. 70-71).

Such a woman must have given almost as richly as she received, even from Emerson.

In 1839 the Fuller family, reunited, settled in Jamaica Plain, a rural suburb of Boston. The famous "Conversations" began that November, and ceased in April, 1844. They were an eminently practical and useful attempt to stimulate more serious studies and deeper thought among the most active-minded of Boston women. About thirty usually met, at eleven in the morning, a dozen times in a winter. Margaret Fuller usually introduced the topic, stimulated the discussion, but often gave way to those better informed in a special field. As those who attended were, nearly all, in the full current of "Transcendental" thought, the inevitable themes were comparative religion (or "mythology"), conduct of life, ethics, education. Margaret had many of the highest and rarest powers of the teacher. This was one of the most sensible and flexible forms of "Extension" ever devised. The wonder is that the "Conversations" did not then and there demonstrate and supply a permanent need.

Margaret's fascinating homeliness had at this time developed to full perfection. She was loved ardently by women, and became the helpful friend of many scholarly and active-minded men. She was generally accepted as at least an equal in the group of most advanced students and freethinkers. If a man, she would doubtless have been, like nearly all the intellectual leaders at that time,—Emerson, Hedge, Ripley, Clarke, Parker, Bartol, Brownson, the Channings, and others,—a Unitarian clergyman, chafing at the collar even of that easy creed, and eager to

Conver-sa-tions in Boston,  
1839-1844.

assert the absolute freedom and divinity of her own soul. She and her friend Elizabeth Peabody actually were members, from the beginning, of the famous club nicknamed "Transcendental," which met first at Mr. Emerson's house in the fall of 1836, and monthly or so through several following years.

*Dial,*  
1841-1844.

She, even more than Ripley or Emerson, actually started the *Dial*, and never received a penny for two years' tireless editorial work. It is to be hoped she can still enjoy, with us, Colonel Higginson's comparison of reformers with Eskimo dogs, harnessed separately lest they devour each other. Alcott, adrift in the clouds, Theodore Parker, stamping the earth, and most of her other contributors, alike criticised her driving. Broken down in health, overworked, and desperately poor, she escaped in 1842, and Emerson reluctantly but serenely drove on to certain sledge-wreck two years later. As the original Prospectus of the *Dial* had declared, the contributors—supporters it never won—had "little in common but the love of individual freedom and the hope of social progress." The progress was chiefly centrifugal. That list of contributors brings together, however, for the first time, nearly all the chief names in our literature of the next thirty years.

"Woman in  
the Nine-  
teenth  
Century,"  
1844.

Miss Fuller's book, "Woman in the Nineteenth Century," was completed in 1844. It is a fearless demand for full equality of rights with men. Most of the conditions she craved have long since been secured. A section of this book (quoted by Mr. Stedman) gives, under the name of her friend "Miranda," a thinly veiled chapter of her own early life, and shows belated but cordial gratitude to her father.

In 1844-1846 Miss Fuller was a regular writer on the *New York Tribune*, and at first a member of Mr. Greeley's family. Her interests and writings took a wide range. Here she made the over severe but perfectly sincere criticisms upon Longfellow's and Lowell's early work which, restated in her book, "Papers on Literature and Art" (1846), brought down upon her the ungallant and unfair lash of Lowell's most savage satire, in the "Fable for Critics."

The last four years of Margaret's life were spent in Europe. Her happy marriage to a young Italian count, and their death, with their child Angelo, by drowning, off Fire Island on her return, are well known. Her finished "History of the Roman Republic" (*i.e.* the short-lived republic of '48-'49), perished with her, as we are told.

Life in Italy,  
1846-1850.

It is not strange that this frank, fearless woman, conscious of intellectual mastery, should have excited hostility, especially among men. That even those who on the whole disliked, or disapproved, this novel type of womanhood, nevertheless felt a certain charm in her at the same time, seems illustrated in Hawthorne's "American Notebooks," under date of August 22, 1842.

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## SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM STUDY

Margaret Fuller's life, as the pioneer among our professional women of letters, is of extreme interest as well as highly important. The friendship of Emerson and so many others, the dislike shown by Hawthorne and still more by Lowell, make her the more interesting. The life by T. W. Higginson is at least *among* the best in a valuable but very uneven series, and should be carefully read by every serious student of our literary history. Mr. Greeley's testimony as to her all-sided generous helpfulness in personal relations is especially hearty. Mr. Wendell's cynical treatment of her seems to me the least pleasing page in his book. No teacher will find any lack of interesting material for discussion, and disagreement, as to this life and character. The present author would rather be wrong with Colonel Higginson than right with Professor Wendell, the Hawthornes, and Mr. Mozier. ("Nathaniel Hawthorne and his Wife," Vol. I, pp. 259-262.)

## IV. OTHER FRIENDS OF EMERSON

Amos Bronson Alcott,  
1799-1888.

There is certainly much temptation to regard Alcott as merely a large, vague, ludicrous caricature, or distorted shadow, of Emerson on his visionary side. His serene helplessness in ordinary human relations helps out this view. A failure as peddler, pedagogue, plowman, poet, he relapsed contentedly into unlimited and unfruitful discussion of the unknowable. Miss Fuller wrote once that she wished she could conquer her doubts as to his soundness of mind. His "Orphic Sayings" were the heaviest load the *Dial* carried, but he tranquilly pasted the parodies of them into the bulky volumes of his own "Scriptures."

There was a large humorous side to the Transcendental movement and its devotees, enjoyed by

none more keenly than by "our later Franklin," Emerson himself. Alcott must often have provoked his silent mirth. Emerson knew, as well as Lowell, how promptly the elder sage betrayed himself when he turned to his pen, but expressed extravagantly his reverence for Alcott's conversational brilliancy. Most men thought it was but the sun admiring the radiance of the moon.

Altogether, in spite of Emerson's generous judgment of the man, and a long life of tireless and harmless talking and writing, one is inclined to be grateful to Alcott chiefly as the father of his well-beloved daughter Louisa, who with her pen rescued the family from the depths of poverty and dependence.

The last survivor of the original Concord group was the poet William Ellery Channing, to be confused neither with his more famous uncle, nor with his cousin William H., also a Unitarian preacher, who spent his later life chiefly in England. "Ellery" was the favorite companion in Concord of Hawthorne, as readers of the delightful introduction to the "Mosses" will recall. His verse has all the willfulness of genius. One line,

"If my bark sinks, 'tis to another sea,"

was a favorite motto of Transcendental days. He enjoyed the distinction, indeed, of being selected by Poe as the especial butt for his critical ridicule lavished on the whole daft guild. Much more beautiful than any of Stedman's citations in "Library" or "Anthology" is the stanza of Channing's quoted by Sanborn (p. 84), in his "Thoreau," beginning,

Louisa May  
Alcott,  
1832-1888.

William  
Ellery  
Channing,  
2d,  
1818-1901.

“Ye heavy-hearted mariners  
Who sail this shore,  
Ye patient, ye who labor,  
Sitting at the sweeping oar,  
And see afar the flashing sea gulls play. . . .”

Yet he is so uneven, so willful, that Emerson himself complains sharply of his negligence as to rhythm and form generally.

To one other friend of Emerson, though not a member of the Concord group, George Ripley, there is a temptation to allude here, because his strenuous life is a thread which in certain ways best unites many things peculiarly important and now already hard to understand. One of the founders of the famous club, and of the *Dial*, he also bore the chief burden and sacrifice, both of money and time, in the famous Brook Farm experiment. As a reviewer for the *Tribune*, and a “reader” of manuscripts for *Harper’s Magazine*, he rendered great though hidden service to letters for many years. In the list of books still alive in 1900, however, he appears only as editor of a cyclopædia.

George  
Ripley,  
1802-1880.

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For Emerson’s view of this group,—with himself effaced from its center,—see his “New England Reformers” and “Transcendentalist.” Louisa M. Alcott’s “Transcendental Wild Oats” is also an intimate study.

## CHAPTER II

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

HAWTHORNE also spent happy years in Concord, and the Wayside was more permanent than any other of his earthly homes. Yet he is hardly more a member of any literary group than Poe. Emerson himself was but his kindly village neighbor, and could not even approve the lonely artist.

Nathaniel  
Hawthorne,  
1804-1864.

Yet, in Hawthorne's case, again, we must insist on the clear strain of Puritanism. An intense moral purpose is the very soul of his art. Through scrutiny of human lives he would fain reach the mystery of life itself, of the divine nature, of sin and its atonement. His idealism is so constant that his creations are in danger, more than all else, of fading into allegorical abstractions. His work impresses us as austere truthfulness in its outlines. As for the color, also, it is indeed, usually, the somber gray of the prosaic earnest New England life. But now, in the fullness of time, there has come a sudden miracle: the man appears whose touch gives to all things the charm of artistic form, and also the tender, unobtrusive grace of his own nature.

So far as he can be understood and accounted for at all, we must seek the key to Hawthorne in the whole story of his race. "New England's poet,"

Lowell's  
description  
of Haw-  
thorne in  
"Agassiz."

our keenest critic calls him. As our most characteristic and unique gift to the world's wealth, Hawthorne demands earnest and intimate study.

In the preface of his masterpiece, the "Scarlet Letter," he himself says of the William Hathorne who came over with Winthrop: "I seem to have a stronger claim to a residence here on account of this grave-bearded, sable-cloaked, and steeple-crowned progenitor,—who came so early, with his Bible and his sword, and trod the unworn street with such a stately port. . . . He was a soldier, legislator, judge; he was a ruler in the church; he had all the Puritanic traits, both good and evil." That first American Hathorne could hardly have been as stately or as fearless, nor did he ever, inquisitor though he was, look half so deep into the hearts of guilty men, as his descendant. The severity of that ancestor toward the Quakers, the zeal of his son in persecuting the witches, the lonely wanderings of their descendants who were sea captains through intervening generations, all enter into the blood and soul of our first great romancer. There is hardly a glimmer of his usual half-incredulous smile, as he speaks of the ancestral curse, transmitted from the cruel and hated judge, "which the dreary and unprosperous condition of the race, for many a long year back, would argue to exist." A similar evil inheritance, with the curious family pride that goes with it, may be found delicately depicted in the Pyncheons of Hawthorne's second great romance.

Hawthorne's father, a taciturn sailor, captain of a merchantman, died of yellow fever at Surinam in his son's fourth year. His wife survived him over four

decades, but never resumed any social relations with humanity, even eating absolutely alone, in her own room. The elder of Hawthorne's two sisters was hardly less a hermit, under the same roof. Much of his boyhood was spent on an uncle's estate upon the wild shore of Lake Sebago, in Maine. There he wandered widely through the summer forests, and was at home on the lake, fishing, or in winter skating, oftenest alone. A serious lameness, prolonged for years, strengthened the deep tendency to solitude, and made the boy an assiduous reader, "Pilgrim's Progress" being an early favorite.

A lonely  
youthtime.

A maternal uncle sent Hawthorne back to private schools in Salem, and supported him at Bowdoin College, where he graduated in 1825. A single wonderful sentence in the dedication of the "Snow Image" to his classmate, Horatio Bridge (1851), reveals, by the lightning flash of genius, the "lads at a country college, gathering blueberries, in study-hours, under those tall academic pines, or watching the great logs as they tumbled along the current of the Androscoggin, . . . or catching trouts in that shadowy little stream which, I suppose, is still wandering riverward through the forest, though you and I will never cast a line in it again."

It seems that Bridge even then prophesied a romancer's career for his friend. Indeed, Hawthorne's ability as a writer was remarked by his instructors also. But the curriculum was narrow, the methods of teaching uninspiring, the library meager. Perhaps no environment would have made Hawthorne a scholar. His younger classmate, Longfellow, under the same conditions, was

a far more devoted student. Hawthorne was stalwart, ruddy, shy, but social enough within his little circle, a typical college lad outwardly, with an inner life already barred from all profane intrusion.

His own heart's desire was for authorship. Indeed, his first group of stories, the "Seven Tales of my Native Land," was already completed in his college days, offered in vain to many publishers,—and finally burned. The extravagant account in "The Devil in Manuscript" has doubtless many truthful details. A boyish romance of college life, "Fanshawe," was actually published at his own expense, in 1826, but carefully suppressed soon after.

Now follows a period of extreme seclusion for a dozen years. Indeed, the young author seemed at times about to pass completely into the strange hermit life of his mother and sister. He, too, usually left the door of the Salem homestead only after dark, and avoided nearly all social relations. He did make, each year or so, some quiet journey or tour of observation for a few weeks more or less, like the one described in "The Seven Vagabonds." He was in vigorous health, a desultory but wide and critical reader, and his pen was in constant practice. Many stories actually written in these years were not printed until much later. A trifling and irregular return did come to him from annual "Souvenirs," short-lived magazines, and similar sources. His fame grew slowly but securely. The lonely family apparently had sufficient means for their modest needs.

The published portions of the "American Notebooks," unfortunately, do not begin until the summer of 1835, near the end of this important period. How

much has been suppressed we do not know. These careful records of Hawthorne's observations and thoughts were the fit tasks of his apprenticeship in literature. It is of the utmost importance to notice the practical sense, the keen scrutiny, the realistic description, in these copious notebooks. "Keep the imagination sane," he says in a notable passage. His own creative fancy seems to have been always under his control. In his finished masterpieces the effects which he produces on other minds were always definitely and consciously studied, based, as it were, on a well-reasoned psychological mastery of himself and of his theme. He has the dramatist's—not to say the magician's—consciousness of his audience. But the notebooks are as a rule simply materials for future works of art, and clearly intended for his own eye alone.

These occasional "glimpses of life through a peephole" perhaps sufficed for the needs of a student whose chief attention was always centered on the innermost mysteries of the human heart itself. Equally close and accurate was his study of inanimate nature, which is seen, for instance, in his "Main Street," and which gives so great a charm to such master scenes as the "Forest Walk" in his "Scarlet Letter."

But no less important, certainly, is the development of Hawthorne's wonderfully lucid, easy, yet imitable style, which is the perfect garment for his thought. It was the result of patient daily practice continued through many years. He tells us that he never attempted anything but the simplest possible expression of his thought: a task quite arduous

An author's  
apprentice-  
ship.

enough, if we remember how subtle, whimsical, pathetic, and elusive a Hawthornesque fancy may be.

So Hawthorne came to maturity. It is profitable, though rasping, to read the cosmopolitan Henry James's analysis of our extremely provincial conditions in those days. That Hawthorne's own artistic genius had often felt cramped and starved, is confessed in the preface to the "Marble Faun," and elsewhere. It is not at all certain, however, that more genial conditions would have made him a greater or more exquisite artist. The beauty and fragrance of the *Epigaea repens* can be perfected only under the dead leaves and chill snows of our long New England winter. Other suns, other flowers. Irving was ripened, Cooper apparently distracted, by foreign travel, international acquaintance, world-wide fame. Few of Hawthorne's admirers feel that he ever surpassed the "Scarlet Letter." After all, noble human lives, in the environment of nature, are the only adequate or necessary material for the highest art. Mr. James makes a portentous list of things which New England lacked: cathedrals, castles, art galleries, etc.; but, as Dr. Holmes says: "There was yet enough to kindle the fancy and the imagination. My birth chamber looked out to the West. My sunsets were as beautiful as any poet could ask for."

Timely escape from seclusion.

From this seclusion of a dozen years Hawthorne was drawn, at first much against his own will, by the Peabody sisters. The elder, Elizabeth, later well known for a long life of active philanthropy, discovered, in 1837, that the exquisite tales which had delighted them for seven years, in the *New England*

*Magazine* and elsewhere, were written by a neighbor and playmate of her childhood. When she introduced the coy youth to her invalid sister Sophia, the divine spark was at once kindled. Love worked such a miracle as with the Brownings, whom the Hawthornes long afterward knew well in Italy. To make an adequate income, and marry, Hawthorne ventured forth again into active life.

There is a very important entry in the "Notebooks" under date of October 4, 1840, a retrospect in the light of his dawning happiness. Though cruelly mutilated by his widow in her editorial effort to efface herself from the page, it is still the utterance of a rescued prisoner, who had struggled vainly to escape unaided. After one or two attempts to make a living as editor and hack writer, Hawthorne accepted a position in the Boston customhouse, 1839-1841. Next followed a year at Brook Farm, where he lost the thousand dollars he had painfully saved. He did not venture to marry until 1842, and had a precarious and scanty income for years thereafter. But full enjoyment of human ties, and of course eventually a happier, completer, and truer vision of life, came to Hawthorne through an ideal marriage. The preface to the "Mosses" should be studied here as a record of this happy time.

The general character of the "American Notebooks" has been referred to. Hawthorne's habit of journalizing was apparently all but unbroken. The portions printed were very severely edited by Mrs. Hawthorne. His son Julian, in his biography, has added a few more extracts. Of Hawthorne's purely personal writing, in particular of his exquisite love let-

Unsatisfactory publication of the "Notebooks."

ters, more has already been accorded us than the writer himself would have permitted. But the journals, printed essentially intact, might enable us to construct the true artistic life of our greatest romancer. Thus, under October 25, 1836, we find fourteen printed pages, chiefly suggestions or germs for possible tales and sketches. "The Christmas Banquet," "Virtuoso's Collection," "Procession of Life," are here plainly foreshadowed. There must be many earlier data of no less value.

At present we are in a hopeless maze. Many of the finished tales lay long years awaiting the chance of publication. Each volume went far back, and culled from forgotten magazines or even unpublished stories. The preface to the "Mosses," in particular, is somewhat misleading, since it leaves the impression that all the sketches are the output of the same period. Such a study as "Young Goodman Brown," which had been already printed in 1835, would have been a strange, I think an impossible, product of Hawthorne's first three or four happy married years. "The New Adam and Eve," on the contrary, seems all aglow with the light of new-found happiness, and could have been written only in the Old Manse itself.

Between the boyish "Fanshawe" (1826) and the master's imperious bid for fame in "The Scarlet Letter" (1850), a quarter century, Hawthorne printed, and probably wrote, no tale longer than "The Gentle Boy," which contains about twelve thousand words. Everything he thought worth reprinting is gathered up in "Twice-told Tales," (Vol. I, 1837, Vol. II, 1845), "Mosses from an Old

Manse" (1846), "Snow Image" (1852). Here are some eighty-two titles, which cover all the important work of his first period. The average length is less than five thousand words. So for the twenty-five years after leaving college Hawthorne only offered the world, annually, three or four very brief "short stories." Many experiments were indeed abandoned, and the results usually destroyed. The fact remains, that for more than half his working career this industrious laborer could show less in bulk than some writers, of uniformly good taste and refinement, say Marion Crawford, might produce in a single year. No wonder the quality and finish is exquisite. If in all those quiet hours of toil Hawthorne has merely ground a perfect lens, through which we may see more clearly and truly certain recesses of the human heart, his craftsmanship has not been wasted.

Slow pro-  
ductive ness  
of Haw-  
thorne.

Some titles in each collection are mere studies of real human life or nature, which may well have been trimmed out, with little or no change, from his daily notebooks. Thus "Night Sketches," "Sunday at Home," above all "The Haunted Mind," are the observations and musings of a hermit. In "Sights from a Steeple," "Footprints on the Seashore," "Old Ticonderoga," the widening path is still a lonely one. In "The Village Uncle," which should be read side by side with Charles Lamb's "Dream-children," the fisher-maiden Susan, though sketched from life, is hazily picturesque rather than real. "The Seven Vagabonds" are human enough, are indeed mostly real people, who appear as such in the "American Notebooks," but the author is there still a mere spectator, roving, as it were, incognito with his ne'er-do-weels.

A particularly interesting study is "*Main Street*," since here we see combined Hawthorne's love of nature, an increasing human element, the picturesque consciousness of the past in local history, a certain defiant tenderness for his birthplace, and last his curiously whimsical humor, the edge of it turned, as usual, mostly against his own sober self. Hawthorne's happiest local study is "*The Town Pump*," which he mentions as the "monumental brass" by which he will long be remembered, even in ungrateful and, on the whole, uncongenial Salem. His admiration for a great marvel of nature, his impressions of Emerson, Daniel Webster, and Andrew Jackson, are merged with his moralizing vein in "*The Great Stone Face*." Even more clearly allegorical and didactic is the use made of a local legend in "*The Great Carbuncle*." Yet in all these sketches, and others still, Hawthorne's feet and eyes are firmly fixed on reality, on his native dales and hills.

A patriotic instinct, combined with his need of picturesque material, led him to each episode in our rather homespun annals that seemed susceptible of dramatic treatment. Here the "*Gray Champion*" is a general favorite, though one or two of the "*Legends of the Province House*" press it closely. "*The Gentle Boy*," rather too harrowing and bitter, and not strongly dramatic in its finale, is as frank a confession of ancestral sin, in the persecution of the Quakers, as Hawthorne could make it. Most powerful of all in its lurid mystery is that masterpiece of nocturnal description, "*My Kinsman, Major Molineux*." On a slight historical basis Hawthorne here creates a most realistic yet imaginative and

unforgettable picture. No attentive reader of this brief sketch can ever again call Hawthorne colorless, vague, or dreamy. He uses oftenest, indeed, the chiaroscuro of softer lights and gentler shadows than these, but always with a skilled and masterful hand. Longfellow manages to utter his admiration for this tale in the prelude of the "Wayside Inn," and Hawthorne wrote him that it was "as if I had been gazing up at the moon and detected my own features in its profile."

Two of his own tendencies Hawthorne has described in impatient self-criticism as "curst," or "blasted": his love of solitude, and his fondness for allegory, the full meaning of which he himself was often unable fully to unriddle after the creative mood was forgotten. The ancestral belief in witchcraft certainly lingered in him only as a possible artistic motive. In his own fearless and confiding nature there was no lurking-place for belief in demoniacal powers, nor for any real doubt or dread concerning the Divine Love. His moral teachings point rather to the eventual redemption of each human soul, through the suffering that sin and remorse must bring. This paragraph is written expressly to insist, that Young Goodman Brown, terrific and vivid as his visions are, saw nothing in the forest save the reflection of the evil he bore thither in his own heart. It is but a dramatic allegory, in which the old Puritan's belief is set forth and moralized. Yet its dangerously vivid realism made the night forest a place of dread for our own boyhood.

There are other grawsome tales in these volumes, notably "The White Old Maid," which childish

Audacity,  
and sanity,  
of the Haw-  
thornesque  
imagina-  
tion.

readers should not see. But we must insist always on the great gulf that divides Hawthorne from Poe. The Puritan artist had an imagination at least as audacious and creative, but he never lost the mastery over his own phantasmata, never used his art for other than moral purposes. He was absolutely sane.

There are some sketches wherein the allegorical and didactic purpose is almost too simple and plain. Even a child suspects that "Daffydowndilly" is but a sermon, and prefers "Little Annie's Ramble." "The Threefold Destiny" will have a like flavor for aspiring youth. "Ethan Brand," the man whose heart has turned to stone, has a more occult meaning. In this story there is much realistic detail, "lifted" bodily from the "Notebooks."

In a number of cases Hawthorne openly attempts to assign speech and dramatic action to abstract ideas. "The Sister Years" is rather a hackneyed motive. "Fancy's Showbox," "Hollow of Three Hills," "Earth's Holocaust," will never be general favorites. Indeed, these avowed allegories are little to the taste of our age. "A Virtuoso's Collection" should be read carefully, not so much for the impossible rarities therein assembled as for the indirect light it throws on Hawthorne's own reading and interests generally. "P.'s Correspondence" supplements it helpfully. "The Celestial Railroad" is a direct and happy acknowledgment of the author's debt to Bunyan.

Lastly we may refer to certain etherealized and peculiarly Hawthornesque studies, in which the secret of life, of sin, of art, of beauty, seems ever on the point of being revealed or attained. Such are the

“Artist of the Beautiful,” “Rappaccini’s Daughter,” “Lily’s Quest,” and others. Most dramatic, healthiest, most humorous of these is “Dr. Heidegger’s Experiment.” It is doubly interesting, because in his last years, when habituated to the larger canvas of the romance, Hawthorne made repeated but vain attempts to return to the motive here lightly and happily used: the quest after the elixir of perpetual youth.

All such classification as is here attempted must be incomplete. No tale or sketch of Hawthorne is without some unique charm and value. All are at least gracefully worded. In any choice selection of short stories he should still be far more largely represented than any other American.

After the four years of happy poverty in the Old Manse, 1842–1846, followed three of drudgery as surveyor in the Salem customhouse. In 1849 the incoming Whigs not only displaced Hawthorne the Democrat, but slandered his official character to excuse the removal. The next year, 1849–1850, was doubtless the darkest winter in his life. Hawthorne’s mother and sisters were now under one roof with his wife and children, and in this year his mother died, after a long and painful illness. Hawthorne himself and all his family were ill. Unable to collect what was due him from editors, he was compelled to accept a generous gift of money collected among his friends. This indeed he always regarded as a loan, and eventually repaid. The libels on his character distressed his friends, apparently, more than himself. Under such conditions the “Scarlet Letter” was written. This triumph of genius over

Genius triumphs over outward conditions.

outward difficulties was perhaps equaled by Mrs. Stowe, a year or so later.

*"Man the measure of all."*

The supreme subject, to which every great artist aspires, is the life of man as a whole. As the lyric is but the utterance of a single mood, as the idyl is the picture of one incident or scene, so the short story is as it were a one-act drama ; it can deal effectively only with a single crisis of inner or outward life, not with the larger curve of destiny. The doom of a Macbeth, a Hamlet, a Lear, even the lighter loss and easy recovery of a Rosalind or a Prospero, could not be set before us in one brief scene. So the gradual fall of Tito, the painful uplifting of Romola's nature, require the larger space of the romance. The greatest masterpiece of human imagination, the "Commedia" of Dante Alighieri, is also the completest vision of man's education through penitence and purgation.

*"Scarlet Letter,"  
1850.*

The appearance of the "Scarlet Letter" is probably, then, the largest event thus far in American literature. Here, for the first time, a life, or a group of intertwined lives, is revealed, with entrancing skill, in an environment and with an atmosphere all the artist's own, yet impressing us as ideally true to human nature. Our pity and terror, excited by the sin, the remorse, and the long agony of Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale, leave every reader the sadder, the better, the purer. No wonder that, in after years, many a man, tortured by hidden crime, came to the wise and pitiful romancer as to a priest, able to hear confession, and perhaps to appoint penance, if not to accord absolution. The lonely years of Hawthorne's youth had been well spent, even if this one work had been their only fruit.

There was much repression still in Hawthorne's art. The whole tale contains hardly seventy thousand words. It begins after the guilty lovers are already parted, by remorse and by human law. Only once, seven years later, do they speak freely together without witnesses. In that hour hope and love flash up once more, only to heighten the parting by death that inevitably follows. This is not, indeed, properly a story of passionate love itself, but of atonement for the sin. The weaker nature is tortured to death, the stronger is uplifted, and has yet a long life of self-sacrificing usefulness to live out. Happiness may have come at last, a shy, half-welcome guest, even to her, while Pearl, the innocent result of a misguided yet divinely implanted passion, has no lasting share in her mother's ignominy.

Hester dominates the scene as completely and constantly as an Antigone or a Medea. Even to the physical vision this seems typified, as she stands lonely upon the scaffold in the first chapter, and again, with her lover, her child, and her husband, at the close of the tale. The statuesque uplifting of the chief sufferer raises the romance high above "Adam Bede," where indeed both the erring lovers seem rather unworthy of our deep and prolonged sympathy.

The setting of the story is carefully studied, and in some sense historic. That, however, is and should be a minor matter, a mere quest of effective background to set off the human character. Even over this gloomiest of his longer stories the Hawthornesque humor occasionally plays, as when the occurrence of a brief dialogue of Hester with Mistress Hibbins is

left to the reader's credulity or disbelief. The child, Pearl, is naturally accorded many a lighter touch.

As a rule, the stern Puritanic beliefs seem to be accepted unquestioned. We are once even told that Roger Chillingworth was likely to secure for his victim "eternal alienation from the Good and the True." Yet this, like all our author's witch scenes, is merely artistic belief on Hawthorne's part. His own inmost creed of human hope and unforfeited Divine Love glimmers through his darkest canvases. Arthur escapes his tormentor after all. And even to the half-devilish old man, a blacker sinner than the young victims of impulsive passion, "we would fain be merciful." "In the spiritual world" even these bitterest foemen may "have found their earthly stock of hatred and antipathy transmuted into golden love." Hate, then, and sin, says the romancer, should at last become the means of our education and salvation: a heresy so appalling that our Puritan ancestors doubtless never conceived of it as possible.

The "Scarlet Letter," published early in 1850, was at once successful. Hawthorne was now a famous author, his acute financial worries were over. The next few years were the most fruitful by far in his entire life. They were also marked by three migrations in the vain quest for a settled home. The "House of Seven Gables" and "Wonder-Book" were written at Lenox, in western Massachusetts, in 1851; the "Blithedale Romance," 1852, in West Newton, near Boston. By June, 1852, the family were again settled in Concord, having bought Alcott's house, the Wayside, two miles from the old manse by the

river. Here were written the "Tanglewood Tales" and the campaign life of Franklin Pierce, his college classmate and lifelong friend. But the very next year Hawthorne accepted the lucrative consulship at Liverpool, which made a long and all but fatal break in his artistic career.

By reading aloud the "Scarlet Letter" Hawthorne had sent his wife to bed with a headache. The second romance seemed to him a truer and happier utterance of his inner self. There is a milder, more genial tone, his whimsical humor plays over many of its scenes. The little country cousin Phœbe was no doubt a cheering surprise to the author himself. Upon the finale a soft autumnal sunshine seems to rest. Yet the morality of the plot is austere, and the hereditary curse, as well as the loneliness and silence within the Pyncheon house, seem closely akin to the author's own Salem life and that of his forbears.

Young readers need no introduction to the "Wonder-Book," of which "Tanglewood" is but a second volume. Each treats six classical myths in the happiest fashion. There is no more delightful contribution to classicism in our literature. Of course the Greek tales are freely recast, the creative element is large; as Hawthorne himself says of his imaginary story-teller Eustace, "he disregarded all classical authorities, whenever the vagrant audacity of his imagination impelled him to do so"; but we would as soon quarrel with Shelley for making delightful English poetry of the Homeric Hymns. Hawthorne's golden touch was happier than that of Midas.

The "Blithedale Romance" is the chief literary

"Wonder-  
Book," 1851.  
"Tangle-  
wood  
Tales,"  
1853.

"Blithedale  
Romance,"  
1852.

memorial of the Brook Farm experiment, often mentioned in these pages. Hawthorne was an original member, invested and left there all he had saved, worked more laboriously in the field and barnyard than almost any of his companions, yet must have seemed to them always a taciturn, critical, and rather quizzical spectator. He can hardly have shared their dream of reforming human society. He did plan to marry and settle among them, but in the spring of 1842, after a year in the community, he rather suddenly departed. His marriage and settlement in Concord of course kept him in touch with the Transcendentalists, through their chief prophet and others. But more than ten years elapsed before his experience was transmuted into material for romance. Indeed, some such remoteness, in time and space, from his realistic materials and actual experiences, was always a necessity to Hawthorne's art.

The characters in "Blithedale" are in no sense copies from life, least of all portraits of his Roxbury associates. The scenery is realistic. The minor incidents may occasionally be identified in the "Notebooks" and other memorials of Brook Farm. The suicide of Zenobia and the recovery of her rigid body from the water are a transcript from actual experience of Hawthorne's at Concord, quoted for us from his journal by his son. (Vol. I, pp. 296-303. It is interesting to remark that Mrs. Hawthorne cut this entire incident out of the published "Notebooks," doubtless because it happened on the night after the happy first anniversary of their marriage.) Such use by the romancer of his own real observations has been noted before in "Ethan Brand" and "Seven Vagabonds."

These close relations to Hawthorne's own past life perplex the reader of "Blithedale," and on the whole must have hampered the creative artist. The central purpose of the story is not clear, unless, indeed, it be merely to show that any attempt at sudden reform of human society will be wrecked by selfish passions or narrow aims. It is perhaps from this point of view that some of his old associates resented Hawthorne's romance.

The warmest discussion has been upon the identity of Zenobia with Margaret Fuller, who was not, indeed, a member, but a frequent and friendly visitor in the Roxbury circle. The question is well stated, *pro* by Henry James, in his "Hawthorne," *contra* by Colonel Higginson in his life of Margaret. It seems to the present writer at least plain that the life and death of Margaret Fuller must have colored, and probably suggested, the most vivid and realistic character Hawthorne ever created.

The perfect balance of qualities which had made purely creative work fully successful seems already to be disturbed in this experiment. With perfect leisure and freedom from all vulgar anxieties, it might have been fully recovered. As a matter of fact, it never was quite regained.

The journalizing habit alone, not at all creative activity, continued through the long official residence in England. The book called "Our Old Home" is little but a transcript from such journals. It is not written by the imaginative romancer at all, but by a shrewd, sensible, practical Yankee. Like Emerson's "English Traits," it aroused resentment among our self-satisfied insular cousins. This strong human,

and as it were earthy, side of our chief magician and artist of the beautiful is seen best of all in a long dispatch to the Secretary of State, Lewis Cass, on the atrocious conditions then existing upon vessels flying the American flag. It is quoted by Julian Hawthorne ("Life," Vol. II, pp. 153-161).

Hawthorne was of course greatly broadened and enriched mentally by his two years in Italy (1858-1859). The "Marble Faun," his longest romance, begun there and completed in England the next year, has still a great circulation. Indeed, it has been copiously illustrated with photographs, and is in use as a sort of supplementary guidebook for central Italy, particularly Florence and Rome. This fashion, which would hardly please Hawthorne's own fastidious taste, is perhaps itself an evidence that the romancer was somewhat overwhelmed and dominated by the wealth of new impressions. There is too much scenery, too much art criticism, overlaying the simple, intense, psychological plot of the tale, just as Romola, Tito, and their nearest associates are sometimes lost in the mazes of Florentine politics and social life of four centuries agone.

This romance is a franker and more elaborate study of the problem treated in the "Scarlet Letter," whether sin, especially a sin of impulse committed in love's name, may be the chief or even the indispensable means of educating an undeveloped soul. But there is much force in the popular complaint that the mysteries elaborately wrought into the plot are never elucidated at all. The reluctant added chapter, wrung from the author for a later edition, only uttered more clearly the truth, that there was

"Marble  
Faun,"  
1860.

Insidious  
decay and  
painless  
end.

no solution to give. Surely this is evidence of imperfect constructive power.

The health and spirits of Hawthorne were already undermined by the terrible illness of his daughter Una in Rome. His four remaining years were largely spent in vain struggles to complete a romance having for its motive eternal youth, or at least the quest for some magical restorative of vigor. The artist's own quest was doubly vain. The exquisite fragments of his various attempts have a pathological interest, quite remote from the value of those earliest suggestions out of which perfect tales were developed in his middle period. The man, the philosopher, the moralist, may have grown to the last, as may be no less true of Tolstoi or Goethe. But certainly that perfect artistic poise which made a great and perfect romance possible was won and lost within a brief tale of months. Two faultless larger romances, the "Scarlet Letter" and the "House of the Seven Gables," are the highest points in Hawthorne's noble and inspiring career. Such briefer tales as the "Snow Image" and the "Gray Champion" are tasks quite as masterly and exquisite, but of course also far less arduous.

We are glad to be assured, from many sources, that Hawthorne's last quarter century, at least, contained all the happiness that can well be included in a mortal's lot. His last years were embittered by the Civil War, but by no acute anxiety or agonizing physical pain. His death was absolutely unconscious and without warning. His gifted wife, and the three children, who all shared in some degree the parents' literary powers, survived him. The common voice,

and the most discerning critics also, had long accorded him the highest place in our young literature.

A happy life.

Surely Solon himself would call this a happy life, and regrets for what might have been are of course as vain, though perhaps as inevitable, as in the case of Keats, or Clough, or Chatterton. If each creative genius is indeed unique, and the unshaped masterpiece is our eternal loss, then we must hope that, in a better organized social state, leisure and freedom may in some way be provided for those who have once for all clearly revealed creative power. But if character counts most after all, then no man should escape the turmoil of life. The Salem customhouse seems to have brought, even to Hawthorne the romancer, a richer gift than could ever have come to his hermit's cell.

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See also brief studies by Mr. and Mrs. Fields, Whipple, Higginson, Curtis, Leslie Stephen, etc.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM STUDY

The extremely full treatment of Hawthorne in the text doubtless covers this ground. In particular, the "American Notebooks" should be carefully compared with the creative works. The "Italian Notebooks" throw similar light on the "Marble Faun." The classical student may profitably study the treatment of the myths in "Tanglewood" and the "Wonder-Book," comparing them, for instance, with Ovid.

## CHAPTER III

### THE LITERATURE OF ABOLITION

THE very title of this chapter appears to indicate something transitory. And yet strife, reform, strenuous effort, in one form or another, for better conditions of life, seems unending; and any especial struggle *may* be at least as heroic, perhaps also as largely typical of all human effort, as was the rescue of Helen, or the battlefields of knightly Arthur. Such a typical and human struggle is the ideal stuff for literature. To understand fully "Uncle Tom's Cabin," or the "Biglow Papers," we must have a clear vision of the terrible death-wrestle between the two economic and social systems, which fought for the control of a continent as inevitably as red men and white, or later, French men and English, had striven before them.

The necessity of this duel was not evident from the beginning. The presence of negro slaves in America is chargeable at least as much to the North as to the South. Slavery gradually disappeared in the one section, chiefly because it was unprofitable. The makers of the Constitution expected it to vanish altogether; the invention of the cotton gin frustrated that hope. Even more Northern states, as Virginia and Kentucky, now found profit in the wholesale breeding of human live stock, for the cotton fields and rice swamps of the extreme South. As slavery

The sin of  
slavery  
national, not  
sectional.

came to be the underpinning of all business and social life, the presence of free blacks in those states grew more and more unwelcome.

Yet even so, the two sections remained long united by the closest political and mercantile ties. The cotton mills lined the New England rivers. The South was the chief market of Eastern manufactures. Age of compromises. The marvelous and, later, decisive growth of the West was but in its beginnings. Frank denunciation of slavery, on moral or economic grounds, was occasionally heard, but generally deprecated. In particular, the conscience of the Northern churches was quieted by the colonization movement: and this shipping away of half-willing blacks, freeborn or liberated, to Africa, was welcomed and aided in the Southern states, because it drained off their most menacing social element. So slavery gained strength steadily in America, while the rest of the civilized world faced ever more and more the other way.

Against all this, one opinionated, pugnacious, heroic man set his face, and insisted on a hearing. "I am in earnest, I will not equivocate, I will not excuse, I will not retreat a single inch, and I WILL BE HEARD," said Garrison, when he founded the *Liberator* in January, 1831. Heard he was, threatened, mobbed, but never silenced. The discussion went on exactly three decades, until lost forever in the din of civil war.

That this period of thirty years is a definite historic epoch is now easily seen. But the chief of that little band of agitators was long ridiculed, despised, or denounced as a persistent madman or incarnate fiend, a Guy Fawkes waving a torch while the whole

William  
Lloyd  
Garrison,  
1805-1879.

social structure was mined. Doubtless the two most helpful early converts of Garrison were Wendell Phillips, who brought to the fray the silver clarion of his gracious and resistless eloquence, and John Greenleaf Whittier, the rustic Quaker youth, with his high-pitched, half-discordant pipe of few and simple stops. Later arrived Hosea Biglow and Harriet Beecher Stowe, a mighty reënforcement. Fanaticism, narrowness, all forms of self-confidence and crankiness, came also. Persecution itself has its peculiar charm for such folk. Vested wealth, party organizations, all the churches save the Quakers, were against them. Yet still their numbers grew, and now they are honored as the pioneers of the new era.

Three currents—the Transcendental movement, making for widest freedom in religious thought, the eager broadening of general culture through lecture courses as well as books, the passion for reform in general gradually concentrating in Abolitionism—are nearly coincident in time, all mainly local in New England, and largely even urged on by the same men. Yet they are not, of course, connected like links in a single chain. Emerson, Ticknor, Garrison, seem even now almost divergent forces.

Three currents in one channel.

## I. JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

That a devout Quaker, who wore the broad brim, and used through life the ungrammatical "thee," is the accepted popular poet for the whole land of the Puritan, is a happy turn of Time's whirligig. But the persecuted early disciples of Fox sprang, like their inquisitors, from the sturdiest and

John  
Greenleaf  
Whittier,  
1807-1892.

best-cultivated English stock. Both could show much heroism in stubborn passive resistance. Whittier's stalwart ancestor, indeed, who came over as a youth in 1638, and who hewed in 1688 the beams for the Haverhill homestead, was not himself one of the Friends, though disfranchised many a year for stanch refusal to withdraw his signature on a petition to the legislature, pleading for tolerance and mercy toward them. The same Thomas Whittier treated the Indians so justly and fearlessly, that even when the atrocities of savage warfare filled all the Merrimac Valley, the dark faces in war paint only leered harmlessly in at his unbolted windows as they passed by day or night. Some later members of the family made their consistent Quakerism doubtful by filling honorably civic and military offices. Our rural laureate himself had a lifelong talent and love for politics, and was nowise lacking even in the needful craft. As to his fighting blood, so shrewd and humorous an observer as Hawthorne smiled early at "the fiery Quaker youth to whom the Muse has perversely assigned a battle trumpet," and Lowell in the "Fable for Critics" is equally happy.

The lonely old farmhouse by the brookside in East Haverhill is now, thanks to "Snow-Bound," the best known in all the land. It is, fortunately, restored and secured as a permanent memorial of the poet's early years. "In Schooldays," "My Playmate," "Barefoot Boy," "To my Old Schoolmaster," add fresh strokes to the simple picture of that boyhood. Enjoyable also is the quiet humor of a prose essay by Whittier, full of early memories, on "Yankee Gypsies." These earlier wanderers

seem to have been an altogether more gifted, cannier, and less numerous guild than the modern tramps. From the lips unshorn of a pawky auld gaberlunzie in the big family kitchen the boy first heard the notes of "Bonnie Doon," "Highland Mary," and "Auld Lang Syne."

Books were as scarce as money at the Essex farmer's ample hearthstone. It was a winter schoolmaster,—not the youth mentioned in "Snow-Bound," but Joshua Coffin, later a comrade in the crusade of Abolition,—who brought to the kitchen fireside, read aloud, and lent to the shy eager lad of fourteen, the very book he needed most, the songs of Burns. What it meant to Whittier he has himself best told us.

Joshua  
Coffin,  
1792-1864.

One volume, indeed, Whittier well knew years earlier still, and remained always peculiarly under its influence. Even toward that book the "Inner Light" gave him a sturdy independence of private judgment. As a child at his mother's knees he remarked that King David could not have been a good Quaker. When near eighty, defending himself, in a letter to John Bright, for having admired "Chinese" Gordon, he compares his martial hero favorably, as a merciful victor, with David and Joshua.

His schooling was scanty, heavy tasks on the farm injured his delicate frame for life, and poverty was long his helpful and welcome companion; but he never had any prolonged or discouraging struggle for a hearing as a rhymer. His danger lay quite in the other direction. His facility in verse was excessive, from childhood to old age. His best poems will

generally bear excision of the weaker stanzas. His keen interest in every question of the hour made his vigorous, easy verses only too popular, for other than poetic qualities. Hundreds of his early poems were printed, often widely copied and read, which he succeeded in suppressing, or at least in keeping out of his collections, in mature years.

Abolitionism  
is the  
inspiration  
of Whittier.

Whittier was his life long an active-minded man, a reader of many books, a friend of statesmen and scholars, a student of history and literature. Yet there was a certain narrowness in his habits of thought, a still more marked simplicity, even monotony, in his utterance. The great cause to which he consecrated his manhood lifted his character and his art out of the commonplace, which they could hardly otherwise have escaped. It is not at all desirable, even if it were possible, for any one to read all his occasional and polemic poetry. Yet there is no author, unless it be Hawthorne, so indispensable to an understanding of what is most characteristic, and best, in the later Puritanism.

Whittier  
meets  
Garrison.

It was Garrison, as editor of the *Free Press* in Newburyport, who first printed Whittier's verses, and, himself a youth but three years older, who had not yet found his life task, encouraged the tall, awkward, yet ardently ambitious, lad of nineteen to improve his education and perfect his peculiar talent. Whittier's full adhesion to the cause of Abolition was given in 1833, and cost him a rather promising political career, probably an early election to Congress. From various editorial ventures he again and again returned to the farm. He early paid off the inherited mortgage, but after his father's death sold the

sterile acres, in 1836, and after a breakdown of his health in 1840 spent the rest of his days quietly in the village of Amesbury. He was there not a hermit, surely, as Longfellow hails him, but a contented yet alert recluse, whose pen never wearied. In truth he was more absorbed in the actual battles of his own time than was the poet of "Evangeline."

When Daniel Webster, in 1850, made his famous speech of conciliation, or surrender to the slave states, Whittier's barbed lyric, "Ichabod," smote even deeper home than the single fierce sentence of gentle Emerson. This is doubly interesting, because the venerable orator and the fiery poet were kinsmen, both inheriting their cavernous and lustrous dark eyes from that famous old preacher, Stephen Bachiler, who till past fourscore and ten was long a thorn in the side of the New England brethren. Moreover, Whittier has come nearer to an apology for this poem than for any other, by setting beside it, out of due order, some verses written long after Webster's death, full of confidence in his patriotism.

Stephen  
Bachiler,  
1561-1660.

When the first storm clouds of the coming Civil War were gathering in distant Kansas, his "Song of the Emigrants" was on every wanderer's lip. It is as a Puritan that he speaks for them :—

"We cross the prairie, as of old  
    The pilgrims crossed the sea,  
To make the West, as they the East,  
    The homestead of the free!"

Though horrified, as all should be, by some earlier acts of John Brown, Whittier celebrated in verse the kiss bestowed on the negro infant in the march to

the gallows. Through the Civil War he chafed more and more against the Quaker tenet of non-resistance.

Whittier suffered less than might be supposed for his Abolitionism. The rural portions of New England were early won to that faith. The turmoil of political strife did perhaps delay the molding of other forms for his simple art. As he says in the “Garrison of Cape Ann” (1857) :—

“The great eventful Present hides the Past; but through the din

Of its loud life hints and echoes from the life behind steal in;  
And the lore of home and fireside, and the legendary rhyme,  
Make the task of duty lighter which the true man owes his time.”

There is no hint of repining here. The Quaker militant has no wish to bury himself among his books, like Longfellow, until

“ The tumult of a time disconsolate  
To inarticulate murmurs dies away,”

nor does he wish to flee from the noise of conflict to the field as Emerson did, or to the forest as Bryant would gladly have done. Whittier, also, was to have abundant time to utter freely all the simple vital thoughts that peaceful days could ripen. Indeed, “Burns,” “Maud Muller,” “The Barefoot Boy,” were already sung.

Certainly in that very year, 1857, Whittier’s life, at fifty, was assured of outward success. The long breach between the Garrisonian irreconcilables and those who, like Whittier, sought to attack slavery by constitutional and political activity, was healed at last. In the same year his collected maturer poems

were published, in the beloved blue-and-gold edition. The foundation of the *Atlantic*, also, made him an honored member in a congenial circle, and provided an adequate utterance for the cause nearest to his heart, as well as for the sweeter poetry that now flowed more and more freely. The "Last Walk" in the autumn of that year is perhaps his most perfect sustained lyric.

In this same year, also, appeared the local narrative poem over which a little war of words arose and lingers still. To Skipper Ireson, a brave and blameless man, the verses did grievous injustice, as Whittier himself came to believe. Curiously enough, the best rebuttal will be found in a book of the East Indian Kipling: "Captains Courageous."

"Floyd  
Ireson."

Just as the war closed, Whittier published "Snow-Bound," which is generally felt to be his strongest bid for lasting fame. Certainly it won him a secure corner in the heart and memory of every loyal child of the New England Puritans. A forced and dislocated passage near the close,

"Of such as he,  
Shall Freedom's young apostle be," etc.

marks the date of composition, but should have been canceled. The young schoolmaster of whom the poet had been speaking was George Haskell. He had wholly vanished for over forty years from the horizon of Whittier, who indeed did not, until years later, recall his name.

Even the fiery lyrics of the ante-bellum days had found readers South as well as North of the great divide. The old age of Whittier, was, as he sometimes smilingly hinted, almost too peaceful.

“ Methinks the spirit’s temper grows  
Too soft in this still air ! ”

He could not be induced to attend the Centennial of Washington’s inauguration, in 1889, and read his own verses, but the poem of the octogenarian is full of pious confidence and inspiring patriotism. Weakened by age and slow decay, long somewhat cut off from social life by his deafness, conscious that his life work was fully done, Whittier met the approach of death, not merely with resignation and faith, but with an eager sense of relief, in his eighty-fifth year.

It is difficult to weigh in Shylock’s balance the exact value of such a man’s work. The popular output of his early years he has himself almost wholly suppressed, and our judgment would undoubtedly agree in the main with his. There was, however, a poem called “New England,” originally composed in 1830, the closing stanza of which was omitted, even two years later in “Moll Pitcher.” Yet this stanza is of especial interest, and has all the easy grace of his best later verse.

Early ambition.

“ Land of my fathers ! if my name,  
Now humble and unwed to fame,  
Hereafter burn upon the lip  
As one of those which may not die,  
Linked in eternal fellowship  
With visions pure and strong and high,—  
... And over temples worn and gray  
The starlike crown of glory shine,—  
Thine be the bard’s undying lay,  
The murmur of his praise be thine ! ”

This prayer, and vow, was in fair measure fulfilled. Even the bitterest opponents of Whittier

have usually felt the sincere patriotism pulsing beneath his fiercest words. Usually, too, while smiting the sin he has charity for the sinner: the exception as to "Ichabod," remarked on above, being a notable proof of the rule. His sympathies with the oppressed were world-wide, and sometimes perhaps not fully deserved, as in the case of Toussaint L'Ouverture, who was far more extravagantly eulogized by Whittier's kindred spirit, Wendell Phillips.

There are three other directions in which the Quaker poet excels, though they are not widely divergent, and even occasionally merge in one. First we may mention his poems of friendship. It was with a personal tribute to Garrison that Whittier sealed his enlistment in 1833:—

"Champion of those who groan beneath  
Oppression's iron hand!"

James T. Fields and Bayard Taylor are lovingly described in "Tent on the Beach"; Taylor, Charles Sumner, and Emerson, in "Last Walk in Autumn." Whittier and Dr. Holmes exchanged many tender greetings in advanced age. The most direct forms of address were sometimes used, as in the case of Fremont, to men whom the poet had never met. In general, personal feeling, sympathy or antipathy, is very strong and vital with him.

Perhaps his closest friendships were with women. His frankest utterance of feeling as to death is addressed to Mrs. Child. Some merry doggerel sent to Lucy Larcom, the cheery and gifted graduate of a Lowell factory, will reveal a very human side of his nature. "How Mary Grew" is a punning

Whittier's  
friendships.

James  
Thomas  
Fields,  
1816-1881.  
(James)  
Bayard  
Taylor,  
1825-1878.  
Charles  
Sumner,  
1811-1874.

Lydia Maria  
(Francis)  
Child,  
1802-1880.  
Lucy  
Larcom,  
1824-1893.

love-poem to the last survivor of the old Abolitionist circle in Philadelphia. An utterance of closer affection will be found in the poem called "Memories," and was perhaps repeated thirty years later in "A Sea Dream." The key to its meaning is fully given, for the first time, in the "Century" for May, 1902. Most of Whittier's long, unwedded life was sweetened by the full sympathy of three noble women, his mother, Aunt Mercy, and sister Elizabeth. The sister shared the lyric gift, and her poems are included in the collections of her brother's works.

Whittier, secondly, is a lover of nature. His loyal admirers will hardly accept the modest disclaimer in his beautiful "Proem," wherein he says:—

"Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,  
Or softer shades, of Nature's face,  
I view her common forms with unanointed eyes."

The New England hills and dales, the rock-bound coasts and their scanty legends, are inseparably associated with his verse. To them his memory long shall

"Cling as clings the tufted moss."

Wordsworth's landscape is not ours. Bryant lacks the eager throb of life and love. Emerson is a philosopher, Lowell a bookman, no peasant, at heart, most of the year, though not when the bobolink comes. Whittier's is always our own voice, even to its monotonous tone and rough dialect.

Lastly, he interprets as no other of our poets the innermost feelings of religious faith and trust. In all hymn books, of whatever creed, he is represented.

In conscious mental weakness, in physical agony, under the shadow of death and deadly doubt, his words come to the lips as inevitably as David's sweetest psalms. His "Old Burying Ground" is less lonely than Bryant's "Crowded Street." Even Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar," Browning's "Prospect," or Stevenson's cheeriest note of them all, the "Requiem," is not more inspiriting, as we face in thought the last great earthly change, than "My Psalm" or "The Eternal Goodness."

If Whittier's music, his thought, his fancy, was essentially commonplace, as colder critics insist, so much the more marvelous is its infinite helpfulness to millions of men and women. And after all, what is the commonplace, save the human side of the largest kosmic truths?

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#### SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM WORK

In connection with "Snow-Bound," the essays, "The Fish I didn't catch" and "Yankee Gypsies," should be fully exploited. An early portrait of Whittier appears in the "Fable for Critics." Drake's "New England Legends" will throw a cross-light on many of the poems. The Abolition movement should be frankly discussed in all its bearings. See Professor Wendell's exposition of the conservative view taken, *e.g.*, by Ticknor. A file, or even a single copy, of Garrison's *Liberator*, with its remarkably prophetic picture and startling headlines, will be found most instructive. "John Brown and the Negro Baby," "Barbara Frietchie," "Floyd Ireson," supply perennial discussion. The personal poems supply much biographical and historical suggestion.

## II. LYDIA MARIA CHILD

Whittier's friendships, as has been said, were especially with women, who seemed better skilled to slip behind the guard of his shy reserve. Among them there were two, each of whom was in her time, doubtless, more widely read than any other authoress. Each hurled a firebrand into the fiercest social and political discussion our nation has ever known. Mrs. Stowe's name is still a household word. If the younger generation are now forgetting Mrs. Child, it is their own grievous loss, as well as ingratitude to one of their earliest literary benefactors.

Lydia Maria  
(Francis)  
Child,  
1802-1880.

*Hobomok,*  
1821.  
*The Rebels,*  
1822.

Born in the suburban village of Medford, near Boston, younger sister of the learned and liberal-minded Professor Convers Francis, she shared to the full all the best influences of Channing's and Emerson's day. Her crude "*Hobomok*" and "*The Rebels*," historical romances, had made her a general favorite at twenty-three. Her "*Frugal Housewife*" ran through more than thirty editions. Her *Juvenile Miscellany*, begun 1826, was the earliest forerunner of *Our Young Folks* and *St. Nicholas*.

In 1828 she married a Boston lawyer. Both soon became ardent Garrisonians. In 1833, the year the Antislavery Society was born, her "*Appeal in Behalf of that Class of Americans called Africans*" was printed. It destroyed her career as an author, in the North hardly less than in the South. Her tranquil, happy life became a battle; for this first antislavery book held long, perhaps still holds, its position as the ablest direct argument ever made

against slavery in America. For many years almost all doors were shut to her or her books.

From 1841 to 1849 the Childs edited the *Anti-slavery Standard* in New York. In 1852 they settled in Wayland, Massachusetts, and there lived happily twenty-two years, an idyllic life, without a servant. When John Brown lay wounded in prison, Mrs. Child wrote to him, in care of Governor Wise, offering to nurse him. The heated resulting correspondence made a printed pamphlet which had a circulation of three hundred thousand copies. In 1867 she published "Looking toward Sunset," a choice collection of hopeful verse and prose on old age, from all literature. She had to the last a fearless word and an open purse for every reform: the more unpopular the better.

As for the exact literary rank of this heroic woman, the critical scales must be passed to younger and cooler hands. In the homes of a few "original Garrisonians" her early books were still cherished. We learned to read, that we might not be dependent on our busy elders for daily absorption in her "Flowers for Children." Our own offspring seem to detect a moral and Edgeworthian flavor in the cherished volume, and prefer "Little Women." We first heard the very names of Pericles and Plato in her Greek romance "Philothea." "The Letters from New York" widened the vista of a village street to our boyish eyes.

Though not successful in rhythmical utterance, Mrs. Child had much of the poet's nature. Her "Philothea" is almost a rhapsody. Her firm faith in thought-transference, her half-belief in metempsy-

chosis, her mystical and ideal tendencies generally, unite with the frugality of the Yankee housewife even more grotesquely, at times, than the similar mixture in Emerson; and, like him, she is herself the first to laugh. Of all the picturesque figures among Transcendentalists and Abolitionists, there is perhaps not one so utterly lovable. Some of her books may yet regain their influence. Though we build fair monuments to the brave reformers whom our fathers shunned and stoned, yet the sudden neglect that then befell their purely artistic work has too often been allowed to darken into utter forgetfulness.

Into Mrs. Child's early novel, "The Rebels," a supposed sermon by Whitefield and an oration by James Otis were inserted. The latter is still a favorite declamation for schoolboys, and is often printed as Otis's own words.

To this chapter might have been added the discussion of the "Biglow Papers," and of many less familiar works down to the time of Mrs. Howe's "Battle Hymn of the Republic." Garrison himself has a memorable record as orator, essayist, and even as an occasional writer of verse. There can be no question, however, what single book will be longest and most widely associated with the destruction of American slavery.

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#### SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

No better center can be chosen for a study of the social and personal aspects of the Abolition movement. Besides the references given already, Whittier's life and letters, and poems, will supply helpful materials. Lowell is even warmer in his loves than in his hates, and his tribute to "Philothea," in the oft-cited "Fable," might well be learned by heart.

### III. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

There is certainly little apparent danger that this name will be forgotten. Mrs. Stowe was a member of a remarkable family, and necessarily lived from infancy in an atmosphere "surcharged with mental and moral enthusiasm." Controversy had no terrors for that dauntless fighting stock. Her father, Dr. Lyman Beecher, led the Puritanic and Calvinistic reaction in Boston for six years (1826–1832), when nearly every other great preacher or scholar of Boston and Cambridge was a Unitarian. He led aggressively and with large success. For twenty years thereafter, as head of Lane Seminary near Cincinnati, he lived on the very frontier of slavery, and the underground railway, as Mrs. Stowe once said, "ran through their house." Married in 1836 to her father's colleague, she saw Binney's press destroyed by a mob from Kentucky that very year.

Harriet  
Elizabeth  
(Beecher)  
Stowe,  
1811–1896.

Lyman  
Beecher,  
1775–1863.

Mrs. Stowe was the poor and overtaxed mother of six children when they settled in Brunswick, Maine, in 1850. This was the year when Webster's Seventh of March Speech inspired Whittier's fearful lyric, "Ichabod," and the enactment of the Fugitive Slave Law seemed a deadly defeat for the antislavery men. In New England, as before in Ohio, she now saw the refugees from bondage, fleeing toward Canada as their sole hope. A strange apathy seemed to be settling over the whole North.

Mrs. Stowe, with all the pressure of family cares, had still wielded at times a facile though not a forceful pen. There is a graphic and pathetically amusing scene in her kitchen, from the year 1838, in Mrs. Field's "Life of Mrs. Stowe" (pp. 98-101). Under no less distracting conditions, certainly, was her famous book to take shape. It came from the most intense conviction of religious duty. A sister-in-law apparently threw the firebrand by writing: "Now, Hattie, if I could use a pen as you can, I would write something that would make this nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is."

The call to write.

Under these conditions, as Mrs. Stowe always afterward believed, she was actually possessed, and inspired, to write a panoramic drama of slavery, over whose unrolling scenes she exercised little if any personal control. All that she had seen and known, not excepting her own peculiarly close and tender home ties, entered into the soul of her work. It is undoubtedly true, that as to moral and religious character Uncle Tom is an ideal combination of all the whitest men she had ever known. Certainly he is not in any sense the natural product of slavery,

which might indeed be glad to claim him, as decisive proof of its supreme efficacy in the molding of Christian perfection. But as a romance, the book surely has a right to an idealized, a superhuman hero. The local color is not at all that of an artist who has known and loved all her life Kentucky and Louisiana. She did endeavor to obtain, through Frederick Douglass, accurate details, for instance, of the tasks in the cotton fields. But the fire of her purpose burned too hotly to wait long for such material.

Not a word had been written when in an instant, in February, 1851, the death of Uncle Tom flashed like a picture before her mind, as she sat at Communion. Written and read aloud that day, it threw her children of ten and twelve into convulsive sobbing. A similar triumph, as was remarked, and at about the same time, Hawthorne won with the "Scarlet Letter."

In April the first section was ready, and sent to the *National Era* at Washington. Announced and planned to reach a dozen chapters and run for three months, it went on for a year. The swift-rising tide of excitement and applause from thousands of readers no doubt uplifted the weary and often desponding writer. To the idealist of any age or creed, all this is perfectly consistent with her later words: "I the author of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'? No, indeed. The Lord himself wrote it, and I was but the humblest of instruments in his hand."

Published in book form April 1, 1852, the work had a success absolutely unheard of. In one year,

Instant success of  
"Uncle Tom's Cabin."

in this country alone, over three hundred thousand copies were sold. By midsummer the poor tired housewife, who had worried over a probable deficit of \$300 in the year's income, received a first check of \$10,000 for the royalty. Thereafter she was the confidante of statesmen, and the honored guest of princes. It was but her due, and it never for an instant turned her shrewd Yankee brain. The contrast, however, with Mrs. Child's reward is almost pitiful. In twenty years our world had moved, indeed.

The book became at once the center of assault from all the friends of slavery. But it turned the tide of public opinion, roused the sleeping conscience of the churches, and of earnest folk generally, throughout the North and West,—was by no means without influence even in Dixie. When Lincoln first clasped Mrs. Stowe's hand in November, 1862, he said, "And is this the little woman that made this great war?" No piece of writing done in America, save perhaps the Declaration of Independence or the *Federalist*, can be compared, in the weight of its results, with this tale by an unpracticed, apparently unimaginative, distracted, and feeble woman.

Only an idealist, one is tempted to say, only a Puritan, could have done such a work, in such a spirit. Its popularity has never abated. There is hardly a human speech into which it has not been translated. In many a state of the Union where a slave never breathed, strolling companies are still sent out every winter for the purpose of "Uncle Tomming," and the audiences never fail with their tribute of tears.

Before such a success, literary criticism hardly dares raise its voice even in qualified admiration. All who toil in earnest with the pen must be thrilled with awe that such results have even once sprung from the word fitly spoken. And yet, the book is not, in form, a sermon, a political plea, or a legal document. A goodly supplement of such documents followed the story, indeed, a year or two later, but not one reader of "Uncle Tom" in a thousand has glanced at a word of it. The final question is not whether the tale is a truthful sketch of actual Southern life, but: "Is it art?" Some day, some far-off, future day, when negro slavery is as remote as the Homeric methods of warfare, "Life Among the Lowly" will live, or be forgotten, purely on its merits as a work of imagination.

I believe that Uncle Tom and Eva are as imperishable as Hector and Andromache. As long as human error and atonement are intelligible subjects of tragedy, as long as men need to be reminded that the innocent must suffer for the guilty, as long as tyrants torture and helpless creatures cringe, so long this dramatic romance will retain its power. Mrs. Stowe only knew, from the beginning, that both Eva and Uncle Tom must die; she had no idea how they were to perish. Eva dies of no disease, save the precocious realization of misery and wrong, which she cannot set right. In other ways Shelby, Topsy, Sambo, St. Clair, Legree, and the rest, typify the deadly danger of men's souls in the grip of an unrighteous social organism. There was never the slightest intent — save to heighten by contrast the tragic scenes — to set forth the pleasanter sides, or the average reality,

Lasting  
interest of  
the great  
romance.

of Southern life. All materials were chosen and used to produce a tragic effect. This is the essence of the artistic aim, and also of the ethical purpose. Uncle Tom's world, or Lear's, is not the real world ; there is no room for happiness in it.

Once started by Mr. Shelby's yielding to the tempter, the whole tragedy becomes inevitable. A happy ending is no more imaginable than for Macbeth or Othello. What could longer life, fuller knowledge, bring to Eva but utter heartbreak in the fuller consciousness of the universal misery and of her own helplessness? Set Uncle Tom free, and he merely ceases from that instant to typify a race in bondage. Both must die, that our pity and terror may be fully roused.

It is interesting to note that the exaltation of spirit in which this task was done by Mrs. Stowe did not vanish with its detachment from her mind and hand. The rush of events toward the decisive death-struggle of civil war, which she had perceptibly hastened, carried her along with it. Once again at least, in her ringing address of 1862 to the women of England, she spoke singly as with the voice of the whole North. Many men believe that by those brave words she turned the tide, or at least started the current of truer feeling in the mother country, made intervention from Europe impossible, and so perhaps saved the Union from permanent disruption.

Some critics consider one or another of the later stories better in literary quality than "Uncle Tom." But no later work of Mrs. Stowe did, or could conceivably, approach in energy or effectiveness this master stroke. "Dred" (1856), or, by its later title, "Nina

Gordon" (1866), is in some portions a kindlier, perhaps a more realistic picture of actual Southern life; but for such work we naturally must look to the children of the Southland itself; indeed we have long ago turned, with delight, to the loving work of such recent artists as Cable, Harris, and Page.

"The Pearl of Orr's Island" was happily begun, in 1853, under the inspiration of the most beautiful and romantic region on our Eastern coast; but the removal to Andover seems to have broken the charm too soon. The "Oldtown Folks" (1869) are quaint and genuine Yankees, but Miss Wilkins, Miss Fuller, Miss Jewett, Miss Brown, have peopled the world of fiction with a host of others, quite as satisfying. "Agnes of Sorrento" (1863) is a pure but pale reflection of George Sand. Of her American society novels, "The Minister's Wooing" (1859) is called the best. But Mrs. Stowe's fame will live with "Uncle Tom."

"One,—but a lion," quoth Æsop's lioness.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Houghton is now Mrs. Stowe's publisher, though her more famous books are reprinted widely by others. The "Life" by C. E. Stowe (her son), 1889, Houghton, had some personal revision by Mrs. Stowe herself. The "Life and Letters" by Mrs. Fields, Houghton, 1897, is the complete and authentic story of her life. In the "Holiday" edition of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is a catalogue of the editions which have appeared in various languages.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM WORK

Both lives of Mrs. Stowe have abundant materials for fuller treatment. The exact environment in which her great book

was planned and written will always be of real interest. Her later relations with the leading women and men of England is a less vital but interesting subject. The two controversies, as to the moral guilt of famous men, which embittered her later years, are intentionally omitted here as irrelevant and unedifying. The account of her last public reception in June, 1882, with the poems read by Whittier, Holmes, and others, is effective ("Life" by C. E. Stowe, pp. 500-505, Mrs. Fields, pp. 380-381). Much fuller accounts can be found in the newspapers of that time. The chief work, however, is the careful study of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" itself. It may be helpful to place beside it Mrs. Mary H. Eastman's "Aunt Phillis's Cabin, or Southern Life as it is," written to correct Mrs. Stowe's errors.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CAMBRIDGE POETS

#### I. LONGFELLOW

TO every young American, to nearly all men and women of English speech the world around, the poet of "Hiawatha" and "Evangeline," of "The Village Blacksmith" and "The Children's Hour," has been from their infancy a familiar friend. For at least a half-century his verse has hardly found a rival in the affections of the race. That very fact makes it the more difficult for us to see the greatness of his accomplished task, to trace the entire curve of a wonderfully rich and full career. Outworn and tattered now by endless repetition, long imitated, parodied, and at last, as we may fancy, outgrown by us, these familiar phrases and measures are really intermingled with our speech of daily life, with every memory and association. Their liquid clearness, simplicity, and music could be perfected only through long days of labor, and nights devoid of ease. Yet they were all created by one sensitive, modest, industrious man, amid the very distractions that fritter away our barren days, and countless others that sprang out of his fame, his patient courtesy, and the selfishness of his myriad unknown visitors and correspondents. Doubtless no life here chronicled has left richer results in human happiness.

Henry  
Wadsworth  
Longfellow,  
1807-1882.

The ancestors of Longfellow lived long within

five miles of Thomas Whittier's farmhouse, with the Lowells almost as near. Yet it was his great-grandfather, a Harvard graduate, who was called to Portland, Maine, as a teacher, in 1744. Henry's father was an honored lawyer, like the grandsire, a congressman in the boy's college days, and later president of the Maine Historical Society. Though Portland was a provincial seaboard town, the poet had more early stimulus to literary culture than Hawthorne in Salem. Self-exiled early, he loved his birthplace, without a trace of the irritation which the romancer sometimes betrays. "My Lost Youth," and "Changed," express perfectly the feeling of the man for the happy abode of boyhood.

Born in the same year with Whittier, he was at Bowdoin College, from 1821 to 1825, the classmate of Hawthorne. They did not discover any intimate sympathy for one another until much later in life. How Hawthorne spent these years we have seen. The Maine boy was three years younger, far less stalwart, fonder of the study and the library. "The government of the college," he writes his father, "seeing that something must be done to induce the students to exercise, recommended a game of ball now and then. Nothing is now heard of in our leisure hours," he adds rather querulously, "but ball, ball, ball." Modern students may find this glimpse of early athletics hardly credible. But so late as 1858 Dr. Holmes, a most competent observer, said, "Such a set of black-coated, stiff-jointed, soft-muscled, paste-complexioned youth as we can boast never before sprang from Anglo-Saxon lineage." That record is broken indeed.

Young Longfellow, if not a bit of a prig, was an undoubted "dig," and earned his prompt reward. At eighteen, graduating fourth in rank among thirty-eight, he was promised a chair of modern languages, after a series of years should first be spent in study abroad. He sailed in May, 1826.

His rhymes had even then long enjoyed a modest vogue. Seventeen poems had appeared in a single magazine, the *United States Literary Gazette* of Boston. Nearly all this boyish poetry was later suppressed. "The Burial of the Minnisink" has a certain interest, foreshadowing his great success with "Hiawatha." But the careful list of his published poems, in the Cambridge edition, reveals no line of original verse between 1826 and 1837. This is a notable example of wise reticence. Schiller remarked regretfully, of his immature tragedy, "The Robbers," "I undertook to portray men before I had known them." Longfellow, more promptly mute, devoted himself to prolonged and exhaustive study.

The next three years were industriously spent in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany. To his Göttingen professors he took personal letters from Ticknor and Bancroft. The most cultivated Americans then living abroad, as the Irvings and Everettts, were his friends, and introduced him into the best European society. But Longfellow was always at heart a student, most at home among books, eager to shut out the noises of the world as jangling discords. A passage in "Morituri Salutamus" reveals that this feeling was a lasting one. He had, at this early time, all the young man's delight to be

"Abroad in the world, alone and free;"

Longfellow  
a bookish  
poet.

he was by no means blind to the scenery and the art of older lands: but what he has to relate to us about them seems always composed in a quiet library, in the full consciousness of whatever bards have sung, or travelers told, before him.

This is doubtless what severer critics mean by calling Longfellow "academic." But surely, literary form *is* an art, which should be learned from its masters. That the true content of literature is the whole of human life, and that it is, therefore, the largest of sciences as well, he fully realized, and has often said. Still, it is true, that a certain bookishness never leaves him. We touch on it thus early, because it is a pervasive quality. His memories of travel, finally published as "*Outre-Mer*" in 1835, illustrate what has just been said: and reveal also the earnest purity and gentleness of a nature that was never embittered by the most grievous sorrows which life could bring.

From 1826 to 1835 the years were spent quietly in teaching and writing, at Brunswick. He edited French, Spanish, and Italian books for his college classes, composed a French grammar, and another, in French, for beginners in Italian. His solid philosophical essays in the *North American Review* were illustrated by many exquisite verse-translations from the Romance languages. This was a long and laborious apprenticeship. Longfellow's importance as an apostle of broader culture to an essentially provincial folk can hardly be overstated. We must notice especially, however, the effect of this long course of "drawing from the antique," in Longfellow's own clean-cut, transparent, seemingly effort-

less style. The "Skeleton in Armor" (1840) is as simple, perhaps, that is, as clearly phrased, as Whittier's "Barefoot Boy." So, indeed, is the "Saga of King Olaf." But the perfect mastery of forms so elaborate, especially in poetry upon such themes, was attainable only through yearlong scholarly study of other literatures.

The one frank utterance of his own literary creed was made in an essay, "Defense of Poetry," in 1832. He openly deplores the morbid influence of Byron, and hails Wordsworth as the noblest singer of the time. He is heart and soul an idealist, but has begun to discover one of the great errors in his own earlier efforts. "We wish our native poets would give a more national character to their writings. This is peculiarly true in descriptions of natural scenery. . . . Let us have no more skylarks and nightingales." As he also regrets "the precocity of our writers," the allusion is pretty clearly to his own "Angler's Song" (1826) wherein

"Upward speeds the morning lark  
To its silver cloud."

Years later still, however, Margaret Fuller had occasion to remind him sharply that we know nothing and care nothing about the recurrence of Pentecost, or whether

"Bishops' caps have golden rings."

Despite the fragrant forest background throughout "Hiawatha," we do not feel that Longfellow ever acquired any such close familiarity as our other chief poets with outdoor sights and sounds. But if we must choose either alone, surely woods and fields are

less interesting company than men and women: a truth Bryant, and even Wordsworth, too often forgot.

Altogether, this essay clearly foreshadows the eventual return of Longfellow, with earnest moral and ideal aims, to creative poetical work. The critical faculty he never wished to cultivate. He sought out and utilized whatever in other literatures proved helpful to him. What he disapproved he silently avoided.

He had married in 1831. In 1835-1836 he again spent eighteen months abroad, in preparation for the Smith professorship at Harvard, vacated at that time by George Ticknor. In November, 1835, his young wife died, in Holland. A brief mention of her occurs in "Footsteps of Angels." Next year he settled in Cambridge, lodging in Craigie House, afterward so closely associated with his fame. As Smith professor he had general oversight over four foreign instructors in languages, his heritage from Ticknor,—a discordant, unruly leash, as he intimates,—but himself only lectured once to thrice weekly. This chair he held until 1854.

His first original poem, after a dozen years' silence, was "Flowers," sent with a bouquet to a friend, in October, 1837. The form is laborious, the general effect somewhat cold and scentless. The true and full return of the poetic impulse occurred the next year, when the "Psalm of Life" forced its way to eager and instant, even somewhat crude, utterance. It at once aroused wide attention, and came like a bugle-call to many a desponding soul. It is full of energy and hope, yet avowedly didactic,

moral, Puritanical. Longfellow called many poems of this period psalms, and is himself the "psalmist" meant in the subtitle of this one.

He still wrote prose, but it is the prose of a poet. His lectures have not been published, doubtless were not as a rule written out. His chief romance, "Hyperion," printed in 1839, is full of memories from the last lonely year abroad. Mary Ashburton, however, is drawn after the life, from Frances Appleton, whom he met in Switzerland, August, 1836, and was destined to marry, in 1843. Ten years later still (1849) the rather slight and pallid novelette "Kavanagh" appeared; but long before that time Longfellow's life allegiance to poetry was fully assured. Indeed even that little book is full of sympathetic art criticism.

The first collected volume of verse, "Voices of the Night," was issued also in 1839. A certain dainty and cloying sweetness, even in the title, recalls still the facile rhymer of college days, and reminds us of Tennyson's early work. It is interesting to note that the full vigor of the new lyric poet is first heard in "Wreck of the *Hesperus*," December, 1839, and "Skeleton in Armor," 1840, both poems of the sea. The especial force and vividness of Longfellow's work on this theme has been often remarked, notably by so virile a critic as Mr. Kipling, in his sketch, "The Best Story in the World." Yet, compared with the Viking rapture of Kipling's own "Last Chantey," or the vagabond's note that floats from his black Bilbao tramp-steamer, —

"With her loadline over her hatch, dear lass,  
And her drunken Dago crew,"

**Sea poetry.** Longfellow oftener seems but a timid landsman, studying the ocean from his cottage door at Nahant. Indeed, the *Hesperus* poem was written at the professorial fireside in Cambridge, and based merely upon a newspaper account. The poet had never even seen the reef of Norman's Woe.

The second marriage of Longfellow, in 1843, was the culmination of his prosperity. As a part of her dower his wife brought him the title-deeds of Craigie House, famous already as Washington's old headquarters. One of his few odes, "To a Child" (1845), unites for us the two chief memories of the mansion. This child must be his eldest son, who was severely wounded eighteen years later, as a soldier in the Civil War. Another son and three daughters were born in Craigie House. In July, 1861, his home happiness was blasted by his wife's tragic death. Always prone to occasional melancholy, he never recovered from this blow. Yet the world was the gainer for his suffering, as the deeper tenderness in his later work abundantly reveals.

His flights of lyrics continued, hardly interrupted for a single year, as long as he lived. They rarely make direct allusion to his closest human ties. His children's mother, like the wife of his youth, appears once only, in the sonnet, "Evening Star." His daughters' names occur in the favorite "Children's Hour." The later sonnet, "A Shadow," has no personal details.

Reticence  
of the poet.

Far more intimate utterances, indeed, in poetic form, the poet made, we are told, but not for our ears. In particular, the most pathetic of sonnets, "The Cross of Snow," not written until eighteen

years after the bereavement, was found in his portfolio subsequent to his death. We may recall that Whittier promptly suppressed his own early prayer for fame. So Longfellow wrote, at thirty-five, "Mezzo Cammin," but never printed it. It is interesting to notice that the sonnet form had become the most natural means for expressing his innermost feelings. No wonder that his more exoteric verses show all but uniformly faultless workmanship. In nearly every English meter his work is an accepted model of form.

In the refusal to give the world his fullest utterances of personal sentiment, this poet is in striking contrast with his friend Lowell, whose "After the Burial" and "First Snowfall" show an intensity of feeling, a rugged frankness, never approached by the elder singer's more silvery music. As in Hawthorne's case, Longfellow the artist dwelt apart from the man, in a close-bolted chamber, whither the actual events of daily life were rarely brought, save as mere suggestions for work of universal human interest.

Still, the happiness of Craigie House is breathed into a thousand such verses as

"Each man's chimney is his Golden Milestone."

"The Two Angels" may have been composed on the very day (October 27, 1853) when his second daughter was born and Lowell's young wife died; but only their own little circle held the key to its allusions. "Weariness," "Resignation," "The Bridge," "My Books," and other lyrics might bid us further qualify the assertion as to Longfellow's reticence. Yet we feel that each is more a finished piece of art, or an

utterance of humanity's cry, than an impulsive self-confession. Poems of friendship, so common with Whittier and Holmes, hardly appear at all: the tributes to Hawthorne and Taylor dead, and the franker one left at the living Lowell's gate, stand almost alone, until in his later years he misses such links in the old circle as Sumner, Agassiz, and Felton.

Hatred or fierce disapproval he never utters, perhaps never felt. "Ichabod," or "John P. Robinson," he could not have written. Political poetry was hardly possible for him. Once, on a sea voyage, he wrote a little sheaf of lyrics against slavery, which were omitted from the next general edition.

The sonnet on President Garfield's death is glorified by a verse cited from Dante's "*Paradiso*,"

"And came through martyrdom unto this peace."

This may serve to remind us how scholarly and world-wide in range Longfellow's art was. An Icelandie Edda, David's bereavement or Bartimeus's faith, Dürer's home and Walter von der Vogelweide's grave,

"Old legends of the monkish page,  
Traditions of the saint and sage,"

furnish equally fit suggestion for song. We can cite indeed from him the verse,

"That is best which lieth nearest;  
Shape from that thy work of art!"

but that very poem bears the name of a forgotten Spanish artist. The international and scholarly quality of the lyrist's art is heightened by his many translations. His "*Luck of Edenhall*," "*Wanderer's*

"Night Song," "Remorse," seem at least to equal the originals, perfect as they are.

Least adequately represented are the great myths of Hellas. This charge indeed lies against our creative national literature as a whole, and is too large a subject to discuss in detail here. Of intimate acquaintance with Homer, the Attic dramatists, Plato, there is hardly a vestige, less than in almost any great British poet of the same century, incomparably less than in Shelley or Keats, Tennyson and Swinburne. The resolve, in 1839, to "take to the Greek poets again," only led him to reread a few of the clever but uninspired pseudo-Anacreontics in his old college text-book, the "*Græca Majora*." Doubtless the causes of this lack are to be traced back to our classical scholarship and collegiate teaching, in which the true humanities have never had due honor.

In "Mezzo Cammin" the poet alludes to his craving, unsated as yet,

"to build  
Some tower of song with lofty parapet."

"The fever  
to accom-  
plish some  
great  
work."

Though he has not created a great national epic or an unquestioned masterpiece of drama, he has made most important advances in both these directions.

The congenial subject of "Evangeline" came to him as a gift, perhaps a half-reluctant gift, from Hawthorne, who first heard the tradition, but could hardly have used it so happily. Less than fifteen hundred lines in length, and containing no real struggle or pivotal action, this poem is at most an idyl, not even a miniature epic. Its pathos and purity, the natural sentiment, the large scenic back-

"Evange-  
line," 1847.

grounds, help to explain the universal love for this poem.

Hexameters  
in Greek  
and in  
English.

But it is also true, that the long, sweeping cadences of our English accentual hexameter, though so generally distasteful to the Greek or Latin scholar, delight the popular ear. The musical effects of Hesiod or Lucretius, not to mention Virgil and Homer, are absolutely unattainable in English. Dactyls indeed, though not easy in our crisp iambic speech, are still possible. But while the vowels are essentially the same, as to number and quality, in ancient or modern hexameters, not even nonsense-verses can be put together, containing less than *twice* the average number of consonantal sounds found in the liquid speech of Hellas or Rome. That is a condition not to be escaped in any English verse, nor indeed in any Teutonic speech. Our dactyls should be criticised only as compared with other forms of English metrical composition: *e.g.* with the anapæsts of Lochinvar.

"Hiawatha,"  
1855.

"Hiawatha" is a true epic, with a hero. His earthly life is more completely delineated, indeed, from its beginning to its end, than Odysseus', or Arthur's. The material was fresh to the poet's first readers, and is of lasting interest, especially to us in America. This poem is the most novel contribution of Longfellow to the world's literature. It does not reveal a wonderfully intimate knowledge of Indian life and character. The original materials, though faithfully collected, were treated with absolute freedom.

This is all as it should be. A true poem cannot be utilized as a mine of archaeological lore. The

“Iliad” resists such attempts, with all but perfect success. Whether Hector’s chariot, Arthur’s sword, Hiawatha’s canoe, ever had an earthly existence is immaterial. They, and their possessors, justify themselves by their perennial charm to each new generation; but that charm is purely human and universal, not dependent on race or local setting. Perhaps, at times, as in the love scenes, Hiawatha shows too much chivalric sentiment and modern refinement. But every artist must describe life from his own experience and environment. Shakespeare’s “Cymbeline” is Elizabethan. Quentin Durward is a young eighteenth-century gentleman, in character and manners: Scott knew no others. So Longfellow had little inner acquaintance with Indian nature.

The simple trochaic cradle-swing of this poem was borrowed from a Finnish epic, the “Kalevala.” It suits perfectly the rather naïve folk and natural scenery of the tale. This verse is by no means so easy to compose as it seems, and has never been used with notable success by a later hand. This is perhaps a pity, since our longer narrative poetry should be fully emancipated from the tyranny of recurrent end-rhyme, which is, in our speech, though not in Italian or mediæval Latin, a grievous bar to natural utterance. Probably very few words were kept out of Hiawatha by the meter.

Neither of these poems is truly national. At least, they arouse no patriotic pride. Rather they have a certain elegiac pathos, reminding us how completely both the Indian and the Acadian life perished under our sires’ ruthless hands. More directly patriotic is “Miles Standish,” which deals with the love affairs

"Courtship  
of Miles  
Standish,"  
1858.

of Longfellow's own ancestors, John and Priscilla Alden. The hexameter is there handled more lightly, even sportively at times. The general effect is bright and sunny, in itself perhaps a miracle, when worked upon our somber early annals. But here again it would be a grave error either to accept or to criticise the poem merely or chiefly as an historic chronicle. We must never wholly forget that the poet's Plymouth is, at his will, an Arcadian port, whose casements open on the seas of Fairyland.

"Eliza-  
beth," 1873.

Longfellow returned to the hexameter once again in "Elizabeth," a Quaker replica of Priscilla. He is somewhat lax in using very heavy syllables in the unaccented part of his dactyls, which are therefore themselves, at times,

"Bent like a laboring oar."

The best English examples of the measure are found, rather, in Charles Kingsley's "Andromeda."

Though even less familiar than Tennyson with the actual requirements of the theater, Longfellow made assiduous efforts to construct his greatest works in dramatic form. The "Spanish Student" has the charm of youth and light-hearted love, with pleasant local color. "Pandora," his chief Hellenic venture, does not justify itself, as a whole, by any larger or novel restatement of the Promethean myth, and soon becomes in the reader's memory a loose-strung series of fine lyric passages. "Judas Maccabæus" is remembered chiefly for one powerful scene, portraying the triumphant despair of the mother whose seven heroic sons accept martyrdom without blenching.

"Spanish  
Student,"  
1843.

"Masque of  
Pandora,"  
1875.

"Judas  
Maccabæus," 1871.

"Michael  
Angelo,"  
1872-1881.

"Michael Angelo," the congenial task of Longfel-

low's old age, was hardly intended to be completed, much less really put upon the boards. Rather do its soliloquies and dialogues form a commonplace book, in which are set down the ripest thoughts of the scholarly poet upon his own craft and the other fine arts. Indeed, the best of literary and art criticism abounds in these calm pages. Many such allusions as that to

“The fever to accomplish some great work,  
That will not let us sleep,”

seem plainly subjective.

The largest dramatic work of Longfellow remains to be discussed. In his thirty-fifth summer, just when “Mezzo Cammin” was written, there appears in his notebook the brief outline for “Christus, a dramatic poem in three parts.” It was a vast undertaking, “the theme of which would be the various aspects of Christendom in the Apostolic, Middle, and Modern Ages.”

“Mezzo  
Cammin,”  
1842.

The second section, the “Golden Legend,” appeared earliest in 1851. The central story, of Elsie’s sacrifice, is happily characteristic of the mediæval age, but the prominence of Lucifer is hardly justified, to our incredulous modern minds. Many scenes are but loosely connected even with Prince Henry’s long journey to Salerno. Altogether, the work is a wonderfully broad picture of mediæval life, perhaps the richest fruit of Longfellow’s scholarship and poetic imagination combined.

“Golden  
Legend,”  
1851.

In the “New England Tragedies” Mr. Longfellow comes into indirect rivalry with his friend Hawthorne, whose ancestor, also, is a character in “Giles

“New  
England  
Tragedies,”  
1868.

Corey." The scenes are vivid and painful, wrought far more strenuously than those of "Miles Standish." Of course they do not in any large sense represent the spirit of modern Christianity, but simply reveal the two darkest pages in local Massachusetts annals. Real dramas they are not, for there is no true culmination, nor even an heroic struggle.

The "Divine Tragedy" handles a subject which most men consider unsuitable for poetic or other freely imaginative treatment. Longfellow here felt much constraint, and often has merely thrown an evangelist's record into rather rough blank verse, with the least possible change of phrase. The intention is undoubtedly reverent, but the whole effect is hardly equal to that of the simple and quaint miracle-play included in the "Golden Legend."

"Divine  
Tragedy"  
finished,  
1871.

"Christus"  
completed,  
1872.

As a whole, "Christus" attempts a subject hopelessly large for artistic and unified presentation. The term "trilogy" perhaps aided to mislead the gentle lyric singer into so vast an effort. But the Promethean trilogy of Aeschylus must have contained, in all its three plays,—or more truly, acts,—less than five thousand lines, which could all be said or sung within a short half-day. The "Golden Legend" alone contains quite that number of verses. The entire "Christus," with the beautiful interludes, is thrice as long.

Dante's  
"Divine  
Comedy,"  
1870.

The capstone of the translator's labors was the great line-for-line version of Dante's entire "Commedia," with copious notes. These volumes are still the best in English for students who wish to master the ideas of Dante. The eleven-syllable verse of

the original makes a most natural unit of measure for sentence and thought, which is quite lost in Mr. Norton's faultless prose rendering. Mr. Parsons's incomplete rhymed translation, though masterly, is naturally far less faithful than the others.

Much of Mr. Longfellow's work, not precisely translation, is, nevertheless, interpretative of other literatures. We have alluded to the miracle-play in the "Golden Legend," and to the "Saga of Olaf." Neither answers to a single foreign original, but each is a more perfect illustration of an unfamiliar type than any mere version could be. He is doubtless the most popular interpreter of literature in general that ever lived. Of course, in drawing his plots, suggestions, figures of speech, etc., from all available sources, Longfellow was but following in Shakespeare's own footprints, as he gracefully remarks in an interlude of the "Wayside Inn." The general frame and plan of the latter book, again, was clearly influenced by the "Canterbury Tales," though the superior genius of Chaucer is frankly confessed in the sonnet, "Woodstock Park." The form of "Building of the Ship" and "Keramos" is taken from Schiller's "Song of the Bell." In our own literature both types seemed novelties.

In these last poems, and still more in "Hanging of the Crane," the easy changes of meter, as the current of the tale quickens or lingers, are remarkable. In general Longfellow's metrical work will reward careful study, and offers examples of nearly every measure possible in English verse.

Longfellow's old age was peculiarly beautiful. His gift of perfect expression remained to the last.

"Morituri  
Salutamus,"  
1874.

"From my Armchair," written at seventy-two, is perhaps the happiest proof of this. The close of "Morituri Salutamus" is sadder, yet nowise embittered.

We get at times even an impression of excessive amiability and gentleness in Longfellow. We almost wish for one fiercer strain, to show him a good hater, if only of injustice or cruelty. But his art, at all events, if not his life, was unclouded in its serenity.

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The only complete edition of Longfellow's works is the Riverside, Houghton, poetry, 6 vols., prose, 5 vols. For the poems the Cambridge edition, 1 vol., is entirely sufficient. It contains a remarkably good brief biography by H. E. Scudder. The life, by Samuel Longfellow, has copious extracts from the journals. The life by Francis H. Underwood is also based on personal knowledge. See also "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow" by W. S. Kennedy, Lothrop. Higginson's "Old Cambridge," E. E. Hale's "Lowell and his Friends," Curtis's Orations, Vol. III.

For all the chief New England authors, Howells's "Literary Friends" and Stillman's "Autobiography" are of value.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM WORK

Almost any one of the longer poems may be made the basis of special discussion or study. Thus "Hiawatha" brings up all our Indian literature, from Leatherstocking to Ramona, with the real red man himself. "Miles Standish" may be illuminated from Winthrop's diary, "Pandora" compared with Hesiod's and other ancient accounts, "John Endicott" read beside Hawthorne's "Gentle Boy," and "Giles Corey" with the histories of the Salem witchcraft (especially C. W. Upham, Boston, 1867). "Michael Angelo" could be delightfully illustrated from familiar works of art. A mere catalogue of the sources from which the poet drew his plots and suggestions would be profitable. A special study of his classical allusions will be found in the *Chautauquan* for February, 1900.

## II. HOLMES

We perhaps first think of Dr. Holmes as a mere humorist. Certainly we come to know him, early in our lives, through the "September Gale," or the "One-Hoss Shay." Even Hosea Biglow, and all the brilliant scholars, wits, and poets, who gathered monthly in the "Saturday Club," used often to sit in silent delight while

Oliver  
Wendell  
Holmes,  
1809-1894.

"Holmes's rockets curved their long ellipse,  
And burst in seeds of fire that burst again  
To drop in scintillating rain."

But wit that holds such a circle entranced can be but the sparkle on the surface, over a deep current of serious wisdom. The "Autocrat" himself once says, almost sternly :—

"Think not I come, in manhood's fiery noon,  
To steal his laurels from the stage buffoon.  
His sword of lath the harlequin may wield ;  
Behold the star upon my lifted shield!"

His wit, then, like his ever fresh variety of theme and style, only lightens our own serious task, which must be to understand the main purposes and fruits of an earnest, laborious, and beneficent life. His character was complex, and strange, rare gifts of genius crowded each other in the teeming brain of that sallow, quiet-faced, asthmatic little man. Of all authors he has perhaps best obeyed the injunction :—

"Look thou into thy heart, and write."

He was in truth "his own Boswell."

Born in Cambridge, close beside the college, on Commencement Day of 1809, the poet of the famous

Harvard class of '29 lived to see his birthplace swept away, in our time, to make room for the new law school. His first landscape included a glimpse of the great Washington Elm across the common ; and big trees were one of his lifelong special studies. Lovers of the Autocrat will recall especially his "apple-pie" wedge from a hemlock, showing its three hundred and forty-two annual rings : which were used by him, of course, as were the abandoned cells of the nautilus, to point a philosophic moral.

The very year after graduation the youth of twenty-one leaped into national notice, with the fiery lyric which saved *Old Ironsides* from destruction. After an attempt at studying law young Holmes found his forte in medicine, and later spent three years in foreign study, chiefly at Paris. With the best medical and surgical training, but else little influenced by France and Italy, he returned to pass the rest of his long life in Boston. He practiced medicine, with fair success despite his local repute as wit and poet. He was most happily married in 1840. In 1847 he was elected professor in the Harvard Medical School. His lectures there, on anatomy, continued until 1882, and are remembered by his old students as the most delightful and sparkling of accurate scientific demonstrations.

His poetic vein ran steadily but not very copiously. His chosen model was Pope, particularly the "Iliad" ; his favorite meter the clashing ten-syllable couplet. The prevailing tone of this early verse is light. Even his beloved stethoscope and microscope are sung in merry rhymes. His longer ventures, like the "Rhymed Lesson," — a lesson in manners, speech,

etc., — are hardly poems at all, but mild specimens of social satire, survivals of eighteenth-century English taste. He won early his position as the Occasional Poet of Boston. For reunions, anniversaries, receptions to distinguished strangers, his graceful verses and yet more graceful recitation of them became indispensable. The annual class songs for Harvard College '29 began in 1851; and it is interesting to note that in the last gathering of survivors, when only three met under Dr. Holmes's roof, one was a classmate named Smith, better distinguished as the author of "America."

Samuel  
Francis  
Smith,  
1808-1895.

In 1852 Dr. Holmes became a most acceptable Lyceum lecturer. His favorite subject was literary criticism, and a series of lectures on English poets of the early eighteenth century really anticipated closely our University Extension methods. Each lecture closed with an original poem, the one on Shelley being a wonderful series of vivid pictures from stanza to stanza.

But Dr. Holmes's fame was as yet mainly provincial, almost local. His life itself seemed settled in a comparatively narrow groove. Such early gems as "Old Ironsides" and "Last Leaf" were apparently his best hope of any enduring fame. Even as a wit, Hosea Biglow, ten years his junior, was far more widely known. But in 1857 Mr. Lowell himself was largely instrumental in changing all this.

The *Atlantic Monthly*, founded in that year, provided for the first time a permanent, dignified, and profitable market for the best literature of the Northeast. That it was fully accepted as a national organ we may hesitate to claim, especially for the period

First num-  
ber of  
*Atlantic*  
*Monthly*,  
November,  
1857.

before the Civil War. It was avowedly a mouth-piece for antislavery agitation and other reforms, as indeed the choice of Mr. Lowell for editor plainly indicated. Yet his first condition of acceptance was that Dr. Holmes should be the leading contributor to the first volume. With some persuasion this was

"Autoocrat,"  
1858.  
"Professor,"  
1860.  
"Poet,"  
1870.

brought about, and the "Autoocrat" was the result. The breakfast table books—the "Professor" and the "Poet" being later pressing of the same grapes—almost created a new form of literature. Or rather, this miscellany, monologue of prose and verse, of punning and preaching, of technical learning and common sense, is as nearly as possible the full self-expression of a remarkably independent, healthy, keen-eyed social philosopher. The high-pitched voice of Dr. Holmes is still heard, no matter who is nominally speaking. Even "Little Boston's" most audacious braggadocio about the Hub is quizzically sincere. The whole effect is doubtless as close an approach to the real and wonderful talk, not indeed of the breakfast table, but of the Saturday Club, as was attainable in literary form.

There is usually as little as may be of dreamy idealism. Almost every word is aimed straight at the ear and mind of "practical" folk. In general Dr. Holmes was conservative, especially in his political and social ideas. A certain aristocratic liking for old families and inherited culture, for moderate wealth and city luxury, he naïvely confesses, as in the poem "Contentment." Big trees, fast horses, rowing shells, and all his other quaint and curious fads, come to mention soon or late. His two *bêtes noires* were homœopathy and Calvinism. In the attack on the

theology of Edwards, in behalf of a happier belief as to man's essential nature and future destiny, he was perhaps rightly accounted a radical, though he himself always adhered devoutly to the rather lax episcopacy of his beloved King's Chapel.

All these topics come into the chat of the breakfast room, with constant veering from grave to gay and nimbly back again. The "Autocrat" contains also a fine outburst of poetry, including the "Deacon's Masterpiece," the "Chambered Nautilus," which was the doctor's own favorite, and also "The Living Temple," a description of the human frame, wherein poet and physiologist are united as never before in any work of literature.

Thus, when close upon his fiftieth year, Dr. Holmes rose suddenly into a place among the half-dozen foremost favorites of the American public. International, to any such extent as Irving's or Cooper's, Longfellow's or Mrs. Stowe's, his fame has never grown. A home-loving home-keeping Bostonian he always remained. Widest culture in literature and science, his later as his early visits abroad, summer migrations or winter lecture tours, only renewed and invigorated this local loyalty.

His two important novels, "Elsie Venner" and "Guardian Angel," are to be included in the same wonderful period of swift production. They reveal the thoughtful physician, for they discuss the great problem of heredity. Elsie Venner is a monstrous, perhaps an impossible being, affected in all her traits and actions by the nature of a rattlesnake, from whose bite her mother had suffered before her birth. Myrtle Hazard, in the "Guardian Angel," is a normal

"Elsie  
Venner,"  
1861.  
"Guardian  
Angel,"  
1868.

and essentially noble nature. The perversities that arise and pass off in succession during her youth-time are ascribed, by the wise nonagenarian village doctor, merely to her rather diverse and warring ancestral legacies of impulse and inclination. This latter story is naturally the happier, but Elsie is a creation of uncanny, almost demoniac, power over our imagination.

Dr. Holmes was perhaps at bottom a theologian most of all. His scientific studies, in the widest sense, were but part of a quest for the great First Cause, the divine source of life. Hence in both these stories, as the author himself frankly says, the chief problem after all is the moral responsibility of the man, or woman, for acts and thoughts really thrust upon each of us by all the past of our kin and race, by all the influences that create our life.

Even in these tales, also, there is often a long stretch of the familiar table-talk, while the story is all but forgotten. In general they are not masterpieces of construction. Dr. Holmes could draw living characters, he even could paint an exquisitely lifelike scene, such as his masterpiece, the party in "*Elsie Venner*," but he could not create and control a masterly plot. The story itself is generally conventional, often too transparent to the experienced story-reader, or again, at times, forced and incredible in its melodramatic coincidences.

The lives of Motley (1879) and Emerson (1884) are based on exhaustive study, and show unexpected capacity to understand the character and work of men remote from himself in type, though bound to him by ties of close personal friendship. Especially

is this true of Emerson. Dr. Holmes never affiliated at all with the Transcendentalists. He had ridiculed Emerson's "Sphinx" in unmistakable fashion, in verse. He shrank from radical reform, feeling the full force of that tradition, convention, social usage, to which Emerson was so calmly indifferent. He was as little an idealist as any true poet can be. Instead of solitude and contemplation, he loved above all things congenial society, discussion, conversation. Of course, such a man's view of Emerson was an outside one after all, yet it is accurate, vivid, even sympathetic in tone.

Dr. Holmes's conservatism included a strong dislike of Abolition, as a menace to the peaceful continuance of the union. When John Quincy Adams made his heroic stand in old age for freedom of speech on the floor of Congress, even he was included with the Garrisonians in the denunciation : —

"Chiefs of New England! by your sires' renown  
Dash the red torches of the rebel down!  
Flood his black hearthstone till its flames expire,  
Though your old Sachem fanned his council-fire!"

This was in 1846. Ten years later his verses on Daniel Webster traverse sharply the position of Whittier in "Ichabod." Of course the great crisis of the Civil War brought these two poets much closer together politically, as they had long been in personal friendship, and gave a very different association to the word *rebel*. Yet it is curious that these two, so wide apart in all outward relations, remained at last sole survivors of the old circle, and when long past eighty still cheered each other upward to the snow line.

The permanent arc of Dr. Holmes in our literature will perhaps not be large. His best work is often in a sense controversial. Much of his wit is localized, as it were, in time and space, and will not be intelligible, is not, indeed, intelligible, to remote readers. This is, of course, especially true of his prose.

His poetry is in form as faultless as Longfellow's, though cast in fewer and simpler metrical schemes. His lyrical masterpieces are very brief, and perhaps not numerous. Most of them have been casually mentioned, at least, already. We may close as we began, acknowledging that his rich, rare, all but omnipresent humor will be gratefully remembered. But his best work is never merely humorous. Even the wittiest of all, the "Deacon's Masterpiece," has a few more serious notes, like :—

"Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,  
Deacon and deaconess passed away,  
Children and grandchildren, where were they?"

In reading the "Last Leaf" we can never keep the smile and the tear apart. The "Organ Blower" is more cheerful, yet has some tones as deep as the organ-bass itself. In this pathetic power Holmes at times recalls Hood. But, like him, Dr. Holmes at other times refuses to smile at all. "Old Ironsides" at once illustrates this; but mature years, of course, brought infinitely deeper feeling. In "The Voiceless" the intense throb of the singer's own pulse-beats becomes actually painful to the absorbed listener. Longfellow's "Poet and his Songs" is light-hearted by comparison, and even in Lowell we must seek its

like in utterances of the man, not of the artist, in bereavement. That Holmes in poetry can even be idealistic may perhaps be best shown by his noble "Musa." It should be lovingly compared with Lowell's "Envoi to the Muse," Whittier's "Vanishers," Emerson's "Forerunners": for it recalls a confession which every true poet must some time make, that their best inspiration is never quite uttered aright.

There are clever books of Dr. Holmes to which we have not yet even alluded. Even the garrulous "Over the Teacups" and rather trivial belated novel "A Mortal Antipathy" have their peculiar interest. The many-sided life of the man cannot even be sketched here. His early research as to the contagiousness of certain fevers has saved countless peculiarly precious lives. At some cost of strife and brief obloquy for himself, he has created, more perhaps than any other American, the absolutely free atmosphere for theological and scientific discussion which we now enjoy.

Such great services are, of course, essential in any real appreciation of the man and citizen, but our main concern here is with the artist. We may concede, then, that his creative and permanent work is small in amount. But it is absolutely stainless in moral quality, perfect in style, lucid, simple, and so original that it usually contains no hint of masters or teachers. This alone would suffice to deserve our fullest gratitude, and the confident hope that his name and fame may yet long abide.

"Over the  
Teacups,"  
1891.  
"A Mortal  
Antipathy,"  
1885.

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## SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM WORK

In "Elsie Venner" will be found excellent additions to the Yankee dialect of Hosea Biglow. The personal poems addressed to and written by Dr. Holmes reveal a network of intimate personal friendships. His biography of Emerson, his reply to Lowell's early letter of criticism on his conservatism, his lasting friendship with Whittier, suggest effective contrasts of character.

## III. LOWELL

James  
Russell  
Lowell,  
1819-1891.

Though both Whittier and Holmes survived him, it is generally felt that with Lowell culminated that movement in national literature which had been led by Bryant and Emerson. Indeed, his character and career stamp the whole epoch with a clearer meaning and unity. Irving, Cooper, and their friends wrote mainly to give pleasure, to divert themselves and others from the too serious affairs of life. Poe, however unique, was at one with the Knickerbockers in their detestation of the strenuous, didactic, preaching spirit of Puritanism. In this solemn view of life and all its uses, however, even men else so divergent as Holmes and Emerson, Whittier and Hawthorne, are almost exactly alike. Their art never exists for its own sake, but for man, for God, for truth. It is illuminating to notice that in orthodox hymn books, where Poe, surely, would tap in vain, an alien visitor from the midnight darkness, our Yankee poets, liberal

and even lax as was their own theology, are largely represented. Lowell, born a full decade after the quartette just named, is the avowed disciple of them all; yet he had a vigorous, independent, and complex nature, which demanded for itself full expression.

Longfellow first came to Harvard a mature and honored scholar, who had already drunk deep of manly happiness and sorrow. Holmes felt that he lived most of his years lonely in Boston, aloof from both the Concord and the Cambridge circles, dependent on the gatherings of the Saturday Club for his artistic inspiration and truest companionship. Lowell, then, who at fifty wrote that he had lived in one house, in the country, all his life, is peculiarly the home poet of Cambridge. A village, or rather a scattered trio of villages, only, it was in his boyhood, as his "Cambridge Thirty Years Ago," and Dr. Holmes's opening chapter in the "Poet," vividly set forth. It is worthy of note how nearly all the best work of this period was done in quiet hamlets. Professor Lowell, indeed, so late as 1870, met his famous condescending foreigner while "walking one day into the Village"—so was born, and lived, outside even its vague limits. The fine old colonial mansion stands close to Mt. Auburn. It is excellently described in a letter to an English friend ("Letters," II, p. 392). It was from the rustic "help" on his father's estate that the boy first became familiar with the dialect of the "Biglow Papers." Some outdoor lessons began still earlier.

Lowell the  
true local  
poet of  
Cambridge.

"No bird but I could name him by his flight,  
No distant tree but by his shape was known,  
Or, near at hand, by leaf or bark alone."

The essay on his "Garden Acquaintance" goes far to justify this claim. In 1874, walking with Stillman, he counts fifteen species of birds, nearly all singing, within a quarter-hour ("Letters," II, pp. 132-133).

A happy  
boyhood.

Books were, almost as early, dear and familiar to him. His imagination and poetic impulse he inherited, like Holmes, not from a learned clerical father, but from a vivacious, gifted mother. In Lowell's case there were on the spindle side Keltic blood, and a love for fairy tale, ballad, and legend. In Boston and Cambridge the Renaissance of liberal culture was in full progress. Ticknor's pioneer collegiate work was well done, and Longfellow succeeded him in the Smith professorship when Lowell was a Junior (1836). The best books of modern European literature, at least, were perfectly accessible. Felton sat in the Greek chair, but his work in the classroom seems to have lacked inspiration. Retaining all his life a remarkable facility in writing Latin, Mr. Lowell evidently had decidedly less Greek than we could wish.

Lowell's perfect ease in verse, his wit, a passing attack of erotics, and a lightness of touch which he did not steadily retain, are all pleasantly evident in the clever echo of Burns's dialect, written at eighteen, and at a sitting, to his friend Loring ("Letters," I, pp. 21-26). It was in the very next week that Emerson delivered at Cambridge his first, perhaps his greatest, oration, "The American Scholar." What it meant to the dreamy young prince of Elmwood is set forth in the essays on "Thoreau" and on "Emerson the Lecturer." "It is the sound of the trumpet that the

young soul longs for, careless what breath may fill it. Sidney heard it in the ballad of ‘Chevy Chace,’ and we in Emerson.” The debt, and also the independence, of the younger man of genius to his mature comrade, could hardly be more strongly stated. “He put us in communication with a larger style of thought, sharpened our wits with a more pungent phrase, gave us ravishing glimpses of an ideal under the dry husk of our New England; freed us, in short, from the stocks of prose.”

We are not to suppose all this was effected in that one August hour. The willfulness of Lowell showed itself early. He is said to have struggled to look into every book in the growing college library, *except* those prescribed by his teachers. There is a tradition of rather more audacious disobedience. Certainly, the chosen poet of the class of '38 was in forced exile on his own Commencement Day. He remarks of Concord, in Hosea's voice:—

“I know the village, though; was sent there once,  
A-schoolin', cause to home I played the dunce.”

Lowell in  
Concord.

Emerson was extremely kind to the restless marooned youth, and showed him in their walks together some of his own woodland haunts. Yet the Transcendentalist brethren were ridiculed in the class poem itself. So, too, were the followers of Garrison. In the latter direction, however, a great light came to Lowell very soon after. A letter to Loring in November of that same year calls the Abolitionists “the only ones with whom I sympathize of the present extant parties.” Emerson's idealism, also, he later came to share, more than any other of our well-known poets.

With his lifelong friend, Story, and like Dr. Holmes before him, he tried to gratify paternal pride by studying law. It was not a happy time. "I remember in '39 putting a cocked pistol to my forehead—and being afraid to pull the trigger" ("Letters," II, p. 375). In the letters of that year we hear more of poetry than of legal lore. His first poem publicly printed was probably "Threnodia," in the *Knickerbocker*, May, 1839. Despite many threats to the contrary, he actually completed his two years of nominal legal study, graduated in 1840, but practiced little.

Youth and  
love.

His bolder ventures of about the same time were the publication of a thin first volume of verses, "A Year's Life," and his engagement to Maria White, a fragile child of genius, and also an ardent reformer. The reminiscence of Dante's "Vita Nuova" on his title-page is confirmed by such verses soon after as:—

"O moonlight deep and tender,  
A year and more agone  
Your mist of golden splendor  
Round my betrothal shone."

Lowell himself, a severe critic, would have suppressed most of these early poems if it had been possible. This volume is indeed made up chiefly of clever echoes, by a 'prentice hand. For some years later most of his verse continues rather conventional and artificial, though he developed swiftly toward mature and independent utterance. His modest earnings from his pen grew much less rapidly. His lyrics found a ready hearing in the rather ephemeral magazines of the day. His book, "Conversations on Some of the

Old Poets" (1844), is in rather stiff dialogue form. It has many flashes of wit and keen insight, shows abundant and careful reading, but was ignored by its author in later life.

Lowell's father lost most of his means about 1840, and the young poet had to struggle for his own support. His dislike for law only increased until he escaped from it. He married in December, 1844, and spent the rest of the winter in Philadelphia, but returned permanently to Elmwood, which finally became his own estate. His means, however, were never large, and his love of rare books, with his generous, impulsive nature, often drained his purse.

His wife's influence made him an ardent Abolitionist, and from 1846 to 1850 he was a constant contributor to the *Antislavery Standard*. He was then, as all his life, an indefatigable reader and student of literature, with far more of the critical and analytical tendency than is usual or safe in the creative artist. So three somewhat discordant powers contended for mastery. Whether his true destiny was to become poet, scholar and critic, or political and social reformer, seemed doubtful.

Such hesitation at the "parting of the ways" is not unusual, perhaps not unfortunate, in early manhood. But Lowell never fully made his choice, or at least attempted to choose all three careers; and throughout the rest of his life repined often that he had not planned and spent his years to better advantage. Above all he regretted his wavering and half-hearted devotion to the Muse. "A poet should feed on nothing but poetry." "A poet should not be, nay, he can't be, anything else without loss to

Distracting  
interests.

"Parting of  
the Ways,"  
a poem,  
1849.

him as poet, however much he may gain as man" ("Letters," II, pp. 332, 346). The widespread notion as to his streaks of indolence, however, must be a humorous jest of his own starting. Few men have been such unwearying students, and nearly all European *belles lettres*, from the Troubadours to Tennyson, were stored in his marvelous memory. Indeed, if he had consecrated far more of his hours to "indolent" brooding over his own poetry, we should now be the richer.

Least natural to him, perhaps, was the strenuous devotion to radical reforms which filled much of his youth. Yet he even made a sharp private criticism of Dr. Holmes, for his lack of enthusiasm in such causes (Morse's "Life of Holmes," Vol. II, p. 107). Even then, Lowell's keen critical sense detected his own unwisdom, as the lines on himself in the "Fable for Critics" clearly reveal. Though always alert and fearless as to his civic duties, yet after his wife's death he was long absorbed more and more by his purely poetical and scholastic careers, the latter of which he left reluctantly at last for high diplomatic service.

Lowell's  
youthfulness.

A certain boyishness, in his sudden moods and whimsical impulses, he never escaped. He could not revise patiently work flung off in the fits of inspiration. Many an audacious, indiscreet, even savage line, he would fain have recalled; a steadier self-control, even the instinct of reticence, would have spared him the tardy regret. We must reconcile all this, as we may, with the austere taste, even the fastidiousness, often shown by Lowell the critic.

We may expect to find the work of such a man uneven in quality, of widely diverse tone, but always intensely energetic, and full of his own fearlessly independent nature. That is exactly the case. His "Prometheus" is far indeed from Æschylus's repentant rebel. In truth the Greek hero's name was taken up, avowedly, as a type of the heroic radical who revolts against real tyranny, whose very defeat is his eternal glory and triumph. So the Hamadryad, as vengeful an elemental spirit, in the Greek myth and in Landor's larger treatment, as the Northern Undines, becomes in Lowell's "Rhœcus" a tender-hearted disciple of Wordsworth, and utters a gentle sermon to her faithless mortal lover. So each subject is made plastic to utter his inner feeling.

The clearest bugle note of Lowell's earliest period, worthy to be set beside "Locksley Hall," whose ringing music it recalls, is the "Present Crisis." It has no such occasional or temporary political value as the title implies. It is a grand statement of universal moral truth.

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide."

The "First Snowfall" was written when his infant daughter Blanche died. After a second child, Rose, had been laid beside her sister in sweet Auburn, his only son had died in Rome, and, finally, his wife had followed them to the grave, in October, 1853, he completed his "After the Burial," begun when the first blow had fallen. This is perhaps the deepest and most personal cry of agony in all our lyric. Emerson's "Threnody" has tones as tender, but the man

Full utter-  
ance of self  
in lyric.

was even then serene, a mental state Lowell hardly ever knew. From the brief, starlit tragedy of his married life, only his youngest child, a daughter, was spared to him.

"Biglow  
Papers," I,  
1847-1848.

Lowell had meanwhile leaped into national fame as Hosea Biglow, in 1847. His biting wit was no new discovery, to the poet himself or to others. Indeed, the authorship of the "squibs" was guessed by many from the first. His hot indignation over the Mexican War—forced upon the unwilling North, and waged, as he believed, to secure more room for slavery—fused all his powers in eager activity. He is merciless to Caleb Cushing, to John P. Robinson, or to any other political opponent. As to his travesties of the motives, character, and life generally of the South, as in "The Debate in the Sennit," it is amusing, now, to note that Poe singles him out as the most fanatical of Abolitionists, as the author whom "no Southern gentleman can with self-respect read" at all.

Dialect  
verse.

His rhymes show a real genius in audacity. The dialect, though perfectly genuine and still fully alive, is often ignoble, the spelling being at times as aimlessly illiterate as Josh Billings's. This latter error, indeed, which has misled many later dialect writers, is frankly deplored by Lowell himself. The regret of Sumner, that the poems "were not written in the English language," is well founded as to many portions at least. Much of Lowell's most serious and lofty thought is swept into this strong current, as in the thrilling stanza:—

"Massachusetts, God forgive her,  
She's a-kneelin' with the rest."

This is however especially true of the second series of "Biglow Papers," inspired by the Civil War. These are much loftier in all purely poetic qualities. Yet even there the "Courtin'" and "Suthin' in the Pastoral Line" justify, nay demand, the Yankee dialect, to which indeed they cling, defying any attempts to translate them into English.

The Reverend Homer Wilbur is a semidramatic creation, yet much of Lowell's own genuine learning, his mastery of Latin good and bad, his reckless wit, and his wide knowledge of men, is accredited to the dim-eyed old parson. Indeed, after the humor of the verses has become largely obscured with the details of last century politics, parts of this stilted prose may yet be treasured among the essayist's best utterances. But it would be difficult to name any canon of fairness in warfare which the young radical and man of genius observed scrupulously in this book. The second series, as was said, is full of exquisitely noble verse and prose. But in utter lack of sympathy with all things in Dixie it goes, if possible, even beyond the former volume. All this only reminds us of the bitterness of civil war. The long poem in "dog Latin" marks the extreme of Mr. Lowell's perverse audacity.

The year 1848 was one of remarkable activity. Besides completing and publishing the Biglow volume, he wrote his "Fable for Critics." The main story of this work would be too attenuated, disjointed, and unintelligible for a comic opera. One of his footnotes is

"Turn back now to page — goodness only knows what  
And take a fresh hold on the thread of my plot."

"Fable for  
Critics,"  
1848.

It is now read almost solely for the rollicking, audacious, yet most lifelike descriptions of the chief American authors then living. Most of these sketches are little masterpieces. We must remember that in nearly all cases much of our authors' best work was done later. Thus Hawthorne had written none of his larger romances. We need not dwell on these critiques here, since they must be referred to carefully in studying nearly every writer of our period. The worst personal feature in the poem is the oft-repeated ridicule and abuse of Margaret Fuller, who was then in Italy, living the most heroic chapter of her strenuous and helpful life. Her chief offense in his eyes was that of which he accuses Poe, "flinging mudballs at Longfellow": and, let us add, at young Lowell himself. But we cannot imagine Longfellow himself taking such a revenge.

The same wonderful year produced, among other poems, the popular favorite among all Lowell's serious verses, "The Vision of Sir Launfal." It is a sound sermon. It has its charm as a story, though not clearly told. Its touches of outdoor life are a delight to appreciative readers. We can understand perfectly that it should have been written in a state of *possession*, during which the poet neither ate, slept, nor regained full consciousness of outward things. Its chief marvel is its utter remoteness from so much of his other work. From "Launfal" to "John P. Robinson he," not to mention the wearisome and aimless ingenuity of Mr. Knott, the gamut is about as long as if one hand had composed "Hudibras" and Rossetti's "The Blessed Damosel."

Lowell's career as a Harvard professor of French,

"Vision of  
Sir Laun-  
fal," 1848.

Spanish, and *Belles Lettres* began in 1855, but he actually spent the first two years abroad, so the burden of editing the *Atlantic Monthly* was undertaken at almost the same moment. He resigned the editorship after only two years, but from 1862 to 1872 had joint charge with Mr. Norton of the *North American Review*, then a scholarly quarterly. Out of his college lectures grew in large measure the important essays in literary criticism, a field in which he is an unquestioned first among our authors. Except the studies of Dante, Lessing, and Rousseau, these papers deal usually with English and native authors, from Chaucer to Swinburne and Thoreau.

Perhaps no American gained from the Civil War such large and swift development as Lowell. His personal share in the national atonement included the loss by death of all his nephews and other nearest young kinsmen who had been as sons to him. A famous passage in "A Good Word for Winter" commemorates them. His lyric contribution meantime to the northern cause was chiefly in the dialect poems. His "Political Essays" contain a remarkable series of prose papers which, in a noble spirit of patriotism, mark and sum up the stages of the struggle. The study of Abraham Lincoln is a wonderful example of early and full appreciation. Most of it was printed in time to cheer the heart of the great Emancipator himself, before his tragic death. We may well imagine, even, that the impatient, intolerant Puritan scholar found helpful instruction

Smith  
Professor,  
1855.

The Civil  
War,  
1861-1865.

"In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,  
And supple-tempered will,  
That bent like perfect steel, to spring again and thrust."

It has always seemed noteworthy, in a poem by a college professor, recited on the day when Alma Mater paid her honors to her own

“Heroes living, and dear martyred dead,”

that the culminating passage should hail the statesman bred amid ignorance and poverty as

“New birth of our new soil, the first American.”

Mr. Scudder has recently reminded us that this famous stanza was added just after the public reading. This “Commemoration Ode” is generally regarded as the loftiest fountain jet of American poetry. If the critics are herein for once too fond and proud, it is but natural; for at least it was the first adequate and noble utterance of the nation’s deepest pent-up feelings. This poem, like “Sir Launfal,” was thrown off all but instantaneously, in a white heat, at the very last moment. With this lofty ode Mr. Lowell took his place, which he held thereafter without rival, as our national patriotic poet.

This position was fully maintained in the three memorial poems, on the centennials celebrated for the battle of Lexington, for Washington’s assumption of command, and for the Declaration of Independence. Here some of Lowell’s rarest qualities: frank, fearless, discriminating patriotism, philosophic and scholarly historic sense, and poetic genius: were fully and happily fused.

The most sustained poem of Lowell which is quite detached from any passing event is the “Cathedral.” This was, indeed, his most serious effort to reconse-

“Commemoration Ode,”  
read on  
Commencement Day,  
July 21, 1865.

“Cathedral,” 1869.

crate himself to purely creative literature. It was a characteristic freakishness that disfigured the introduction with an atrocious international jest and pun. Yet the poem, brooded on ever since his actual visit to Chartres in 1855, is full of the deepest thoughts on art, history, and the whole life of man. It is, indeed, somewhat too esoteric and ideal at times to be easy reading. A few passages like

“Spumesliding down the baffled decuman”

defy analysis altogether. But we rise from a perusal of the austere lofty and sustained rhapsody with a fuller realization, how much more he might have been as poet alone: if his nature was indeed capable of such concentration. Some of the blank verse is truly Miltonic.

Excellent evidence of Lowell's growth, in all ways, may be seen by comparing some of the portraits of friends in his “Agassiz” (1874) with the better-known sketches in the “Fable for Critics.” The feeling of approaching age in the later poem seems premature, but was heightened just then by exile, ill health, death of friends, and bitter shame at our ignoble politics. Even so, the music of the verses beginning

“Yea truly, as the sallowing years”

brings us rich enjoyment, wrung from the poet's sorrow.

Mr. Lowell went to Spain as minister in 1877, and was transferred to London in 1880. The next five years were perhaps the most useful of his life. His social success was a surprise to him, and he occasionally repined, naturally, over the long absences from

Diplomatic  
career,  
1877-1885.

his books and pen. He was in great demand also as an occasional orator. His volume containing these British addresses is called "Democracy," and a group of them really have a certain common link, emphasizing the essential unity of the Anglo-Saxon race, and of its leadership in the century-long and successful struggle against mediæval feudalism and class privilege generally. There were verses in Hosea Biglow's strident, nasal voice, not wholly forgotten or forgiven in England, which might well have made him *persona non grata* to court and people alike. But those earlier utterances were felt to be, like the latest, sincere, patriotic, and full of sturdy pluck. The boyish man of genius had fully matured at last.

The present full restoration of normal good feeling, of conscious harmony in national aims and spirit, between ourselves and our long alienated Saxon brethren overseas, is doubtless more due to Mr. Lowell than to any other one man. Beside such prospective results in our politics, culture, literature, as we can already foresee, the loss of tenfold all the exquisite lyrics he might have written can still be borne.

When our eldest seat of learning celebrated her two hundred and fiftieth anniversary, he would have been generally demanded as the poet of this truly national event, had he not been even more imperatively needed for the larger utterance of the orator. Dr. Holmes's silvered hair and finished iambic verse honored the second place. It was their last notable public appearance.

As has been indicated often, such a life is altogether too large and complex to be measured merely

Harvard  
Memorial  
Oration,  
November,  
8, 1886.

by the yardstick of scholarship, or even by the magic wand of poesy. Lowell's verse is almost wholly lyric, and mainly a frank and full self-utterance. His fondness for occasional jest or even pun, his sparkling humor, even his boyish impulsiveness and fickleness, must never blind us to the intense seriousness of his life as a whole. Dr. Holmes, himself quite capable of mere heart-easing mirth, knew aright his younger and more strenuous fellow-Puritan,—

“ Whose play is all earnest, whose wit is the edge  
(With a beetle behind) of a sham-splitting wedge.”

Lowell's purely critical essays must doubtless eventually share the fate of all secondary and interpretative work, which each new epoch usually performs afresh from its own newly gained outlooks. Yet such papers as his “Dante” must long remain useful, illuminating the more arduous regions of literary study. As that pleased Mr. Norton, so his paper on Chaucer passed with approval under the searching eye of another beloved neighbor, Francis J. Child. His painstaking method is illustrated by his re-reading, more than once, every line of Dryden or Pope before he expressed his mature judgment upon such a master of style. Far more delightful to the general reader, however, indeed really a part of his creative, even poetic utterance, are “My Garden Acquaintance,” “Good Word for Winter,” and similar prose studies. In particular, the two longer chapters of autobiography, “Cambridge Thirty Years Ago,” and “Moosehead Journal,” leave a lively desire for more.

Lowell's prose is not, on the whole, at present, an

accepted model of style. His fondness for digression, for remote illustration, even for rather recondite allusiveness, loads his sentence and page too heavily for the less patient and more hasty reader of to-day. And yet, there is perhaps no writer of our country who would better reward the undivided devotion for a year, or more, of a mature, critical, independent American student.

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#### SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

An intelligent reading of the "Biglow Papers" must include careful discussion of both the Mexican and Civil wars. The outdoor poems, essays, like "Good Word for Winter," "Garden Acquaintance," etc., and passages in the "Letters," like II, pp. 132-133, should be brought together. The personal criticisms in "Fable for Critics" should be compared with Lowell's later utterances, and the opinions of others. Any one of his greater essays will permit indefinite illustration. The "Dante" is perhaps the most important.

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We may here call especial attention to the close personal friendships interlinking all our chief New England authors, and to the numerous utterances of mutual admiration. Even the youngest student, armed only with a shelf-ful of our poets in *e.g.* the "Cambridge" editions, will easily find these memorials for himself. Lowell's Letters, Longfellow's journals, Hawthorne's Notebooks, may also be searched with profit.

## CHAPTER V

### LESS FAMILIAR NAMES

OF course, the larger figures of our classic period, which we have endeavored thus far to delineate, have only emerged into eminence gradually, in most cases, amid a throng of eager rivals. We must remember, too, that many names, now even less familiar than Mrs. Child's, were once much more widely known, certainly, than Hawthorne's or Thoreau's. Such diverse figures as the wildly romantic and mystical Maria Gowen Brooks, Southey's "Maria dell' Occidente," and the eminently proper, pious, prosy Lydia H. Sigourney, best known as the "American Mrs. Hemans," were once bright stars, though now pale indeed, in our eastern sky. In both cases, the modest excerpts of Mr. Stedman, whether in "Library" or "Anthology," will probably allay all eagerness for more.

Often a single popular favorite, like the "Old Oaken Bucket" of Samuel Woodworth, or the "Woodman Spare that Tree" of George P. Morris, is all that survives from a busy and prolific pen. Pierpont, a sturdier and more heroic figure, is still a favorite of schoolboys, through such "pieces" as "Warren's Address."

A most striking illustration of short-lived fame is Miss Catharine M. Sedgwick, who is quite unnamed in some recent brief accounts of our literature. The present historian is confident that he never saw any

Maria  
(Gowen)  
Brooks,  
1795-1845.  
Lydia  
Howard  
(Huntley)  
Sigourney,  
1791-1865.

John  
Pierpont,  
1785-1866.

Catharine  
Maria  
Sedgwick,  
1789-1867.

one of her books. Yet her career of fifty years, whether as teacher or author, was alike prosperous and honorable. Irving praised her "classic pen." Her "Redwood" (1824) was ascribed to Cooper, and had a success in five languages. The "Lindwoods, or Sixty Years since in America" (1835) was an accepted masterpiece of historical fiction.

Richard  
Henry  
Dana,  
1787-1879.

The long and useful life of the first Richard H. Dana covers almost our whole national existence. No wonder that the essays, poems, and tales published in his early youth were forgotten, like his friend Paulding's. Even his once famous verses entitled "The Buccaneer," it is said, when reprinted in a modern magazine, were generally accepted without question by its readers as a new production. He is somewhat better known, perhaps, as a founder of the scholarly *North American Review*, in 1815. His son, the second Richard H. Dana, is remembered for his excellent account of his "Two Years Before the Mast."

Richard H.  
Dana, 2d,  
1815-1882.

John  
Godfrey  
Saxe,  
1816-1887.  
Henry  
Wheeler  
Shaw,  
1818-1885.

A genial and popular writer not many decades ago, Saxe is already fast approaching the oblivion that awaits the professional funmaker, who passes with the very fashions and follies that he satirizes. While Saxe's punning verses remind us of Hood's most whimsical vein, "Josh Billings" was a real and shrewd social critic, whose sayings often deserve preservation in a saner orthography.

Silvester  
Judd,  
1813-1853.

Readers of the "Fable for Critics" will recall Lowell's enthusiasm over the "Margaret" of the Reverend Silvester Judd,

"the first Yankee book  
With the soul of Down East in't."

Mr. Lowell is speaking of the more idyllic and simpler first part, not of the strange vision of a Unitarian ideal community elaborated later. After my own vain struggles honestly to read this "crude, careless, irrelevant, improbable" three-decker of a book, with its occasional streaks of realism and simple pathos, it is consoling to note Professor Richardson's confession, that it took him years to struggle through it. Some vivid pictures of our rough pioneer life might well be excerpted for general circulation in "Readers," the more as Judd's own brief years were heroically spent among the very people he describes. Indeed, the book is evidently not a bid for literary fame at all, but a painful sociological and religious study.

Two minor poets, both also Unitarian preachers, and born in the same year with Judd, had a part in the Transcendental movement. Jones Very, in particular, is a true mystic. Such poems as "Yourself," and "The Dead,"—both in the Stedman "Anthology,"—may well have shared the ridicule, and deserve quite the attention, so largely bestowed on Emerson's "Brahma." The "Old Road" is a fitting pendant to Bryant's "Crowded Street." If such pairing of American and alien singers were not so trite, and too often merely fanciful, we would reiterate once more the familiar comparison of Very to George Herbert.

John S. Dwight (1813–1893), who instructed the pupils of Brook Farm in music, Latin, Greek, and German, was longest faithful to the first study upon the list, editing for thirty years (1852–1881), in Boston, his *Journal of Music*. Yet only a preacher born

Jones Very.  
1813–1880.

John  
Sullivan  
Dwight,  
1813–1893.

could have sped heavenward, on the lightest, airiest wings of verse, this sweetly solemn, but prosaic thought :—

“Rest is not quitting  
The busy career;  
Rest is the fitting  
Of self to its sphere.”

We are grieved to note that Mr. Stedman, most tolerant of Tityruses, doesn't admit this undoubted singer into the “Anthology” at all, even as the author of “God Save the State.”

Christopher  
Pearse  
Cranch,  
1813-1892.

Still in the same year was born the artist-poet Cranch. He graduated early from the Cambridge Divinity School, and preached a few years, but a strong personal and family bent for painting sent him to Italy. He wrote graceful prose and verse all his life, illustrating his own stories for children, etc. He is most widely known as the translator of the “Æneid.” In this rendering, though less sonorous than Bryant's blank verse, his lines are always smooth and his style natural. The rendering is a remarkably close and faithful one, yet eminently readable.

Edward  
Everett  
Hale, 1822-  
Thomas  
Wentworth  
Higginson,  
1823-

In the present section we have set the somewhat mechanical birth-limit at 1820. Surely the most deliberate career will almost always show its full curve at the age of fifty. A practical reason, next to the opportune arrival of Lowell at the very end of the 'teens, determined us. Two hale and heroic figures, very much alive to-day, started in the race just beyond that line, in 1822 and 1823, and have done quite too large a share of the world's work in the last thirty years to be set back, even with all Nestor's honors, into the previous generation.

All this calls perhaps undue attention to the six or seven men of letters who share the birth-year of Lowell. There is a temptation to emphasize the fact that they came to the young manhood age of eighteen exactly in the year of the Phi Beta address by Emerson, our literary Declaration of Independence. It is easy in nearly every case, save Lowell's, to cavil at this explanation.

Thomas W. Parsons, shiest and most fastidious of artists in verse, was even then in Italy. As a lad of seventeen he had no doubt submitted straightway to the power of the grim Florentine who held him all his days with glittering eye, demanding English utterance for that miracle of song that can never be adequately retold in other speech, the "Commedia Divina," and intoning after his own verse the best lyrics of his votary. Parsons, then, might be accounted rather a disciple of Dante than of Emerson.

Yet a Yankee poet he certainly was, and from Italy or England he came back to Boston as surely as a homing pigeon. He sometimes joined Lowell and Norton in the sessions and discussions over Longfellow's blank verse translation of Dante. Mr. Norton, himself a prose translator, has now edited Parsons's incomplete version of the "Commedia" in rhymed quatrains. So welcome to all of them was the music in the neighboring street. Parsons's "Lines on a Bust of Dante" we "shall remember long."

"Timothy Titcomb" (J. G. Holland) was probably taking daguerreotypes, or setting copies in penmanship, at the other end of the state, while Emerson spoke. Though he worked at almost every other trade, he was a preacher born. His doctrine, how-

Thomas  
William  
Parsons,  
1819-1892.

Josiah  
Gilbert  
Holland,  
1819-1881.

ever, was but a sweet-flavored commonplace morality, which left no deep mark behind it. Even the women, who crowded his lecture halls, have almost forgotten his name. He lived to see the rise of a "writer called Roe," who doubtless eclipsed him with his own popular audience, though now in turn forgot. He was no virile son of Emerson's spirit.

The success of Holland's early books was amazing. That a poem ("Kathrina," 1867) should sell one hundred thousand copies, rivals the run of the "novel of the year" in our own day. He naturally gravitated to New York, was the first editor of *Scribner's Monthly*, and also of the *Century* (1870).

Herman  
Melville,  
1819-1891.

Herman Melville, though he was born and died in New York, was by parentage, marriage, and for a time by residence, associated with New England. He, when Emerson spoke, was working his way before the mast toward Liverpool. However, his literary career is a peculiarly detached one. His life as a sailor, and startling adventures among cannibals in the Marquesas Islands, provided materials and suggestion both for his romances and for his more authentic memoirs. He holds his own beside Cooper and Marryat, and boy readers, at least, will need no introduction to him. Nor will their enjoyment ever be alloyed by a Puritanic moral, or mystic double meaning.

Edwin  
Percy  
Whipple,  
1819-1886.

Edwin P. Whipple is a happy example of strenuous persistent self-culture, on a somewhat limited and rugged nature. He long ranked as a good second, at least, to Lowell himself among our literary critics. If he is now comparatively little read, it is partly because each generation reviews for itself the imagi-

native and creative literature of the past, having little leisure or inclination even for the best of older secondary work. He lacks some part of the far-reaching wit and reckless audacity that make Lowell's essays themselves a part of his unique personal expression. In poetic utterance he was altogether deficient, and indeed is not strictly an original author at all.

In Whipple is perhaps best exemplified the didactic and scholarly side of the Lyceum epoch. That Wendell Phillips, an audacious agitator, consummate orator, and most brilliant of rhetoricians, should draw and hold the crowd, was no wonder. But Whipple was none of these. He was as heavy in person and as scholarly in his style as a German university professor. He simply issued from his Boston study each winter to read his latest essay. He was warmly welcomed by more than a thousand audiences, all the way from New Bedford to Minneapolis. He was felt to be a valued part of the great engine of culture, an engine far more conscientiously employed than is the latter-day magazine.

There is no doubt of this man's allegiance to the heads of the local school. Indeed, his calm studies of Carlyle, Emerson, Ticknor, as well as of many earlier authors, are the work rather of a disciple than of an independent creative mind.

It might seem, at first glance, that Story shared with his friend Lowell nearly everything *except* his filial loyalty to Emerson. Together they strove to please their fathers by studying law. Judge Story, an accepted legal oracle the world over, was anxious to forget his own "Fugitive Poems" of 1804. His son did "practice" for some years, and edited law

William  
Wetmore  
Story,  
1819-1895.

books until 1847. Though already known as a poet, yet when he finally escaped he steered straight for Italy, and devoted himself above all else to sculpture. He came to be so perfectly at ease in Rome that it is hard to believe that he could be fully at home anywhere else. That Emerson was himself somewhat unmoved by painting, sculpture, and even music, is well known. That is perhaps for him, as for many Yankees besides, due to the atrophy of the æsthetic sense through the centuries of repression. Yet it was Emerson who said, "To give all men access to the masterpieces of art and literature is the problem of civilization."

To be sure, even in Story's verse, when Cleopatra, longing for Antony's rough caresses, recalls in glowing visions the happy earlier incarnation when they slew and fought and loved as tiger and tigress, we may fear it a shameless piece of art for art's sake, or at best, of pagan splendor which had but "its own excuse for being." Still, that very apology was framed by Emerson's own modest "Rhodora," while even Jonathan Edwards's "Young Lady in New Haven" seemed to her youthful lover simply beautiful, without as within. Some of Story's verse, as the "Poor Chiffonier," is as clearly full-charged with a double spiritual meaning as Emerson's "Musket-a-quit," or Lowell's "Extreme Unction" itself.

"These tattered rags, so soiled and frayed,  
Were in a loom of wonder made;  
And beautiful and free from shame  
When from the master's hand they came."

No doubt Emerson would agree that the artist-poet Story labored as faithfully, and quite as fruitfully,

for the improvement and happiness of humanity, as Michael Wigglesworth, or Jones Very, or any pale Puritan ascetic between.

Remote indeed in its sectarian tone from Emersonian liberalism is "The Wide Wide World" of "Elizabeth Wetherell." Indeed, the rather bitter satirical treatment of all save the English-born characters indicates a decided lack even of patriotic pride. Neither of the Warner sisters, nor the two in collaboration, ever approached again this first popular success.

Lastly, in 1819 was first heard the "barbaric yawp" of "Walt" Whitman. He so loudly proclaims his freedom from all artistic or æsthetic traditions, that no one will attempt to assign him to a school. That Emerson should have introduced Whitman's coarsest book to the public has always seemed strange indeed. Edward Emerson tells us that his father wrote a courteous private letter, wishing to encourage an aspiring young mechanic, but was much annoyed to find a sentence therefrom printed, in letters of gold, on the covers of the next edition. Perhaps Emerson felt he could not ignore even so shrill and vulgar a response to his famous bugle call of 1837 : "Our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands draws to a close. . . . The sluggard intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids." Whitman's later work, and especially his prose, often expresses in inspiring fashion the exultant vigor, the generous humanity, of our national life. But to the masses he is unintelligible, while to most of the critical few his own defiant scorn for conventions, still more his utter lack of deeper insight or artistic charm, have made him — uninteresting.

Susan  
Warner,  
1819-1885  
Anna B.  
Warner,  
1820-

Walter  
Whitman,  
1819-1892.

Literature  
outside New  
England.

Nathaniel  
Parker  
Willis,  
1806-1867.

John P.  
Kennedy,  
1795-1870.  
William  
Gilmore  
Simms,  
1806-1870.

But the really absorbing force of the "Puritan Renaissance," as Mr. Wendell well calls the epoch from Channing to Lowell, is best seen if we look at decades, and not at single years. Of course, the activity of Irving, Cooper, and their friends continued far into that period. After 1820 there appear Bayard Taylor, Clemens, Eggleston, and other figures, that do not share the New England tradition. But among men whose birth fell in the twenty years immediately following Emerson's (1803-1823), it is difficult to find in the Middle states any prominent figure, except the belated youngest Knickerbocker, the jaunty magazinist and social lion, N. P. Willis. The verses which his apologists quote would not be floated into any great magazine of to-day. The few pages of foreign social gossip printed by Mr. Stedman, with their pleasantly satirical glimpses of Lady Blessington, Tom Moore, and the rest, give us a slight desire for more. Yet this is, after all, but the mere bubbles and spray upon the refluent wave of real literature.

Amid the far more picturesque and leisurely life of the Southland, meantime, only one large shape rises to eclipse the genial author of "Horse Shoe Robinson," who, when a *littérateur* at all, and not fully absorbed in politics, seems half a local antiquary, and half an easy imitator of Scott. Simms we shall discuss more fully, with his friends, on a later page; but his sympathetic biographer, Professor Trent, himself denies him a place in the first rank.

Westward it is still more vain to face as yet. That the generation which tramped and hewed and fought its way toward the Pacific could not see,

and depict in lasting artistic forms, the picturesque side of its own life, is not at all strange. For this we turn rather to Irving, Cooper, and perhaps Paulding, and still more to the new generation.

The large fact remains, the largest fact, indeed, in the story of our literature. Whether personal influence be the essential explanation or not, nearly all the literary artists born in America in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, and a generous proportion of those who have attained eminence at any later time, were of Puritan stock and New England birth. They breathed an air charged with the freedom of thought for which Channing and Emerson had fought. And to almost any of us so born and reared, it remains a lifelong conviction, that the true *efflatus* of our national inspiration has blown, more than from any other source, cold and clear from the shore of the Musketaquit. Perhaps only two or three of our greatest authors later born,—Poe, Simms, and Mark Twain,—have been altogether unaffected by Emerson.

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For many of the authors here mentioned the extracts in Stedman's "Library" or "Anthology" will suffice. "Two Years Before the Mast," by R. H. Dana, 2d, Houghton, Mifflin, & Co. "Margaret," by Sylvester Judd, Little, Brown, & Co. "Essays and Poems" of Jones Very, Houghton. Virgil's "Æneid," translated by C. P. Cranch, Houghton. Dante's "Divine Comedy," translated by T. W. Parsons, Houghton. "Poems" of T. W. Parsons, Houghton. "Poems" of W. W. Story, 2 vols., Houghton. "Whitman," a study, by John Burroughs, Houghton. See also "Whitmania" in Swinburne's "Studies in Prose and Poetry," and T. W. Higginson's paper on Whitman, in "Contemporaries."

## CHAPTER VI

### THE HISTORIANS

**I**N any real literature, the creative and imaginative artist, in prose or verse, holds the central position. His work offers not merely truth, but vital and typical truth, set forth in a form that shall charm, instruct, and sway mankind. Because it is the fullest expression of the noblest individual genius, it is also the truest utterance of the whole people. We all feel this as to the "Scarlet Letter," or the "Commemoration Ode." The perfect form, the wisdom of thought, are alike indispensable. There may or may not be, also, an avowed patriotic purpose, or indeed any peculiar fitness in time or place, for the essential value is lasting and universal. Toward such supreme and lonely triumphs every fine art strives. But apart from his traditional and peculiar fields, such as lyric, epic, drama, romance, the literary artist has free entry into a broad and open middle ground of human intercourse, the domain of the prose essay. One specialized and elastic form of the essay is the record of past events.

Certainly the historian may well be a consummate artist. The very earliest European history was not merely a work of entrancing interest, but was written in a most fascinating style. More than this, its skillful general form was no doubt consciously modeled,

with judicious freedom, after the earlier master-pieces of epic and tragedy. Indeed, not merely Herodotus, but the gravest of later recorders, both in Greece and in Rome, felt free to illuminate the plain tale of events with fictitious speeches and conversations. Such license should doubtless transfer a modern work to the class of historical romance. Still, there are sketches of Irving, especially on Spanish ground, which are not easy to classify on either side.

Save only the reckless zealot, Cotton Mather, our earlier chroniclers were in little danger of erring to the inventive side. The chief names, except Beverley, are little more than those of diarists and keepers of sober annals. Bradford, Winthrop, Sewall, are the most important. Real historical composition begins late, and even then is long almost confined to the narrow limits of Cambridge and Boston. This may remind us how largely the writing of history is, after all, a science rather than an art, a special form of scholarly activity possible only in libraries. The present chapter, then, justifies the early introduction of Ticknor's name, and illustrates further the scholarly side of the Puritan Renaissance.

The intimacy of Prescott with Ticknor began in boyhood, and is summed up in a loving biography of the younger by the surviving scholar. When a Junior at college, Prescott met with the accident that seemed fatal to his promising career. During a merry riot in the Commons hall he was struck in the open eye with a hard piece of bread. The sight of that eye was at once destroyed, the other dangerously weakened. His years of suffering, imprisonment in dark rooms, quest for medical aid abroad, are a familiar

William  
Hickling  
Prescott,  
1796-1859.

tale. It was to be a permanent handicap. Extra exertion always brought agony and prolonged idleness. From pain he hardly knew release.

His studies, in languages and literature especially, were pushed with far more steadfast energy after the calamity. He had a generous fortune, and early in his manhood won a most devoted wife. He early developed grace as a general essayist. In the autumn evenings of 1824, Ticknor, already especially devoted to Spanish literature, read to his friend his college lectures. This first drew Prescott to that language, and so toward his life work. Ticknor's rich library supplied his first Spanish books.

In January, 1826, he determined to make Ferdinand and Isabella the subject of a history. He employed a long succession of hired readers, some of them ignorant of the Romance languages, which he simply taught them to pronounce. Unable to dictate easily, he adapted a frame of wires to guide his own hand. The rude scrawl, which he did not even see, was later deciphered by his assistant.

It was under these conditions that the first masterly historical work in America was done. Completed after ten years of unwearied devotion, and published, it at once became a classic. The subject was happily chosen; recent works in other languages aided an English author materially; but Prescott's "Ferdinand and Isabella" is in the best sense his own. In particular, the pure flowing style, the easy mastery of all the materials, the perfect proportion and connection of parts, the warm interest inspired and evidently shared by the author, are doubly remarkable.

His eyesight improved somewhat in after life,

"Ferdinand  
and  
Isabella,"  
1837.

though always imperfect and precarious. In his tireless search for books and unpublished documents he was always dependent on the sight of others. All archives, and private files of documents, were opened up for him. Friends like Ticknor and the Everetts never flagged in their devotion.

His other chief books grew naturally out of the first. The latest, a life of Philip II, would, if completed, have proved his masterpiece, though the conquests of Peru and of Mexico more easily arouse the enthusiasm of our boyhood. It is well known that Irving insisted on resigning the last-named subject to Prescott, in 1839, though he had made considerable preparations for using it himself.

Mr. Prescott was an extremely generous and lovable man. Doubtless his great calamity ennobled both his character and his life work. He sent copies of his writing-machine wherever he heard of a fellow-sufferer. When Charles Sumner turned radical, Prescott alone, in aristocratic Boston, and Longfellow in Cambridge, still kept their doors and hearts open to the old friendship.

When we recall the careers of Ticknor, of Prescott, in great part also of Irving, the "Spanish Student" of Longfellow, etc., it seems doubly pathetic that we were destined to break the Occidental power, and hasten the utter collapse, of a state which not only sent out the discoverer of America, but was the immediate source of inspiration for so much of our best scholarship, romance, poetry, and historical authorship.

"How much of my young heart, O Spain,  
Went out to thee in days of yore."

"Mexico,"  
1843.  
"Peru,"  
1847.  
"Philip II,"  
1855-1858.

Longfellow's  
"Castles in  
Spain."

John  
Lothrop  
Motley,  
1814-1877.

John Lothrop Motley (1814-1877) also graduated at Harvard, and studied at Göttingen, where in 1832 he formed an intimate and lasting friendship with a gigantic, beer-drinking, duel-fighting, loud-voiced fellow-student, named Otto von Bismarck. Motley himself was extremely beautiful, refined, a sensitive, rather discontented, but noble and generous nature.

Not in love with his legal studies, Motley made two promising failures in novel-writing, and a decided hit with a paper on Peter the Great, in the scholarly *North American*. The story of the Dutch Republic he considered as the opening chapter in the one long struggle for civic and religious liberty, continued without a break in Holland, England, and America. Just when he came to feel that this and naught else must be his life task, he learned that Prescott was already collecting materials for a history of Philip II. Instantly imagining a fatal "collision" of these two subjects, he hastened to the elder author with the proposal to abandon his own attempt. Prescott earnestly urged him to continue, cordially put his own materials at his service, and in the preface of his Philip II announces the preparation of Motley's "Dutch Republic." As it turned out, Motley's narrative follows out one chief thread of Spanish history from exactly the point where Prescott's hand was stayed by death.

Thus another brilliant and competent worker found his true field. But while Prescott writes serenely, like Irving, for his own pleasure and that of the reader, Motley has always the most strenuous and conscious ethical purpose. He will interrupt his narrative, at any time, to point the moral, to declaim,

with intolerant heat, against tyranny and bigotry. But, with scholarly honesty, he displays fully the sources of his statements, which often permit us to qualify his severe judgments, or even his excessive praise, as in his eulogy of the heroic William the Silent.

This largely planned undertaking was in a sense left incomplete. The nine volumes of the "Dutch Republic," "United Netherlands," and "John of Barneveld" form a luminous and connected history of an epoch, but the last is, even in its subtitle, an introduction to the account of the "Thirty Years' War" which Motley hoped to complete. As student, diplomatist, investigator, Motley spent much of his life abroad. His public life is an interesting chapter which we cannot here touch.

The only later American writer on European history deserving to rank with this kindly and illustrious series, Irving, Ticknor, Prescott, Motley, is the venerable and learned Henry C. Lea of Philadelphia, whose "History of the Inquisition" and kindred works have won universal admiration and general acceptance. But it is quite time to turn to the authors who have treated our own past.

Our first creditable historical composition, duly based on the best records available, is that "History of the Province of Massachusetts Bay" which the last royal governor of the colony, Thomas Hutchinson, brought painfully down to date (1774) in his English exile, after his house had been sacked, his papers scattered to the winds, by a Boston mob. This and his other writings give us a high regard

"Rise of the Dutch Republic," 1856.

"United Netherlands," 1868.

"John of Barneveld,"

1874.

Henry Charles Lea, 1825-

Thomas Hutchinson, 1711-1780.

for the heroic aristocrat and conscientious patriot who penned them. We feel lasting regret that this native-born Harvard graduate and scholar, with so many like him, should have been needlessly driven from his home land.

The earliest general history of our country was the "American Annals," covering the years 1492 to 1806, of Abiel Holmes, sober father of a most witty son, and pastor of the Unitarian church in Cambridge. This is described as "well-digested, conveniently arranged," even "interesting."

Abiel  
Holmes,  
1763-1837.

Jared  
Sparks,  
1789-1866.

Jared Sparks, also Unitarian minister, later professor of history and finally president at Harvard, has little charm or personal power as a writer. He was useful as a collector of historical material. His "Life and Writings of Washington," in twelve handsome octavo volumes, was based on prolonged search in the state and national archives, besides much laborious copying of documents in England and France. His equally faithful service to Franklin (1840) has now been superseded by Mr. Bigelow's work. He also edited the first "Library of American Biography," in twenty-five volumes (1834 to 1848), and wrote eight of the lives, the rest being supplied by his Boston friends. The gravest fault in Sparks's work is the freedom with which he "edited" the original documents. We may surely demand the very words of a Washington, or of a Franklin, however faulty the grammar, the style, or even the temper, may appear to his editor. It is only fair to add, that Sparks merely followed the usage of his time. Absolute accuracy in such things is a recent gain indeed, if it be even now assured.

Our best-known national historian planned and executed his great work as if he was aware that his active career was to extend far beyond the allotted years of man. Though the son of a Unitarian clergyman, himself for a time a preacher, whose first book was a volume of poetry inspired by Coleridge and Wordsworth, he was carried far from these early influences. Graduating from Harvard at seventeen, "little Bancroft" overtook Ticknor in Göttingen, won his degree of Ph.D. there in 1820, knew Humboldt at Berlin, and even met Goethe. Niebuhr was still in Italy, but much as to historical method Bancroft learned from Heeren, whose work on "Greek Politics" he later translated.

George  
Bancroft,  
1800-1891.

His friendships with the great European scholars continued unbroken; but as a democrat, a statesman, a cosmopolitan, he passed quite out of the Boston circle with its provincial culture and stanch Federalism, and in his later years made his home chiefly in Washington. He played important political parts, was active in acquiring California, as Secretary of the Navy in 1847, in settling our northwest boundary when minister to Germany in 1871. We have seen him making Hawthorne his weigher and gauger in the Boston customhouse so early as 1839. His literary friendships, like his feuds, were many; for instance, he was active in the rebuilding of Emerson's house after a fire in 1872.

But especially did Bancroft's large means and political power assist the great task of his life. He collected a precious library. He employed skilled secretaries to aid him in ransacking the archives of American capitals, and of other lands. His work will

always be indispensable, most of all to those future historians who seek to displace it.

The first volume appeared in 1834. The final revision in six volumes, correcting, condensing, and in every way improving the original edition in ten, was issued in 1884. The period covered is only from the discovery of America to the inauguration of Washington. The last section, written after the Civil War, and describing the period 1783–1789, is also the best.

The tone of the whole work is that of an exultant Jacksonian democrat. The most savage critique it ever had is the opening sentence of Hildreth's preface for his own less lasting history, written from the Whig or Federalist point of view: "Of centennial sermons and Fourth-of-July orations, whether professedly such or in the guise of history, there are more than enough." Too oratorical, boastful, discursive, Bancroft often is. Washington, in particular, he fairly idolizes. His touch is heavy, and rarely artistic; yet the cumulative effect of copious detail is very strong, as in the account of April 19, 1775. His gravest defect, perhaps, according to the present school of historical investigation, is his failure to give full documentary evidence, wherewith others may correct his own special pleading, and his partial, even partisan, view of the facts. Still, this monumental work claims our lasting gratitude and pride, and may yet long remain dominating the vast field.

As Bancroft is criticised for his excessive and boastful Americanism, so Dr. Palfrey is too constantly the apologist for his section. Yet the story of the Puritan can surely be better understood from

within than without. His work also, the "History of New England from 1620 to 1875," is not yet displaced. It is not a chronicle of entrancing interest to all men, but Professor Wendell's phrase, "minutely lifeless," seems unfilial.

In recent years history is established in high honor as a University study, and the *American Historical Review* has done much to inculcate the severest scientific method. Hence the growing prominence of the exhaustive monograph. Even for the general reader, histories of single commonwealths, biographies of statesmen, and similar works, are multiplying. Still, such books as Senator Lodge's "American Revolution" and President Roosevelt's "Winning of the West" have at once a scholarly, a literary, and a patriotic character. An extremely interesting and prolonged career, whose provincial fame may yet become national, is that of Gayarré, who wrote histories of Louisiana, both in French and English. Many local specialists, like Mr. Thwaites in Madison, are making exhaustive collections which will grow more precious every year. The more comprehensive works are usually either written avowedly by a syndicate of experts, like Justin Winsor's "Narrative and Critical History," with its valuable maps and illustration generally, or else, like Hubert H. Bancroft's yet more monumental and unfinished "History of the Pacific States," are so directly based on the labors of a host of paid assistants that the result is an encyclopedia rather than a single creation.

Mr. J. F. Rhodes's account of his own times, since 1850, shows that the events of the passing generation can still be treated with the judicial fairness of Thu-

Henry  
Cabot  
Lodge,  
1850–  
Theodore  
Roosevelt,  
1858–

Charles  
Étienne  
Arthur  
Gayarré,  
1805–1895,  
Reuben  
Gold  
Thwaites,  
1853–

James Ford  
Rhodes,  
1848–

cydides. Perhaps the most valuable contribution to our national annals from the new schools of research, by a single independent hand, is Henry Adams's "History of the United States," which in nine compact volumes covers only the years 1801-1817. On such a scale the repetition of Livy's achievement is no doubt utterly beyond the limits of a single lifetime.

Certainly is it true, that we lack, and need, a complete history from the settlement of Jamestown to the creation of our foreign empire, in a moderate series of volumes ; let us say, five or six octavos like George Bancroft's. Of course, even the "larger" of Colonel Higginson's two works is entirely too small. The valuable series of volumes by General Walker, Professors Sloane, Fisher, and Burgess is on the whole a text-book, and also not perfectly unified. The pleasant illustrated essay in popular style bearing the name of Bryant, or Scribner, and actually written by Sidney H. Gay, perhaps occupies, but does not fill, the gap to which we refer. The single initial volume of Mr. Eggleston is hardly enough on which to build far-reaching hopes.

John Fiske,  
1842-1901.

This naturally recalls one of our most recent and painful losses, in the death of John Fiske. If such men could be produced in numbers, the Lyceum, without its intolerant zeal, might be more than revived ; University Extension, without a trace of pretentious sciolism, would become popular. Such an unwearying and wise absorber, recaster, and expounder we shall not soon see again. His earlier and later philosophic studies certainly helped to give his books on American history the broad perspective

of Von Ranke's school. But the chief task of the historian, begun somewhat late, doubtless remains a large and tantalizing fragment.

So much the greater is our cause for rejoicing that Francis Parkman lived to complete his great work. Since his biography has appeared, we know that this uncomplaining, reserved scholar had a constant ordeal at least as severe as Mr. Prescott's, perhaps even more agonizing. His journey overland to the West coast in 1846 gave him familiar knowledge of Indian life, and is recorded in a book much beloved by our boys, "The Oregon Trail." But it cost him the heavy price of weak eyesight and rheumatic pain to the end of his days. Insomnia long threatened to bring insanity. Indeed, after the issue of his "Conspiracy of Pontiac," in 1851, there was a long series of years when historical work was impossible. With his indomitable courage he became, even in those waiting years, a great horticulturist, distinguishing himself especially, as did both Bancroft and Prescott, in the perfecting of roses.

The story of the long contest between French and English, for the possession of this continent, was however always before his mind. Yet even when the opening section of the main work, "Pioneers of France in the New World," had been issued in 1865, he passed cautiously on from one monograph to another, with little confidence of reaching the goal. Indeed even now we realize that a somewhat closer linking of those dramatic scenes, a fuller connection with the general history of Europe and the world, would no doubt still have been added in a leisurely revision.

Francis  
Parkman,  
1823-1893.

But the eighteen volumes form a completer and nobler monument than any other our literature of scholarship can show. The task need not, indeed cannot, be done again by any later hand. More than that, we can hardly wish or imagine any other treatment of this material, down to the last detail of style or arrangement. The whole story now seems full of romantic and thrilling interest, but Mr. Fiske, in his happy introduction, shows us clearly how Parkman had in large measure to convert his reluctant audience. In that respect, and in others, his triumph over obstacles within and without seems even more marvelous than Prescott's. Francis Parkman is hailed by general consent of critics and the reading public as our greatest historian, as one of our four or five supreme literary artists.

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A vivid picture of vanished Western conditions will be found in Parkman's "Oregon Trail," as in Irving's "Captain Bonneville" and "Tour of the Prairies."

See also especially Professor J. F. Jameson's "History of Historical Writing in America" and Professor A. B. Hart's "Guide to the Study of American History." On these two books the present chapter leans heavily. Governor Hutchinson, a pathetic and noble figure, has been sympathetically treated by his biographer, Professor James K. Hosmer.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ORATORS

**S**TILL more than the historian should the orator be a master of artistic form, both in word or phrase, and in the larger construction of his entire plea. But he uses these resources under peculiar conditions, which fall away if his mere words are preserved upon the printed page. Even the first speech against Catiline, as we read it, was composed and revised long after in the study. Cicero's masterpiece, the second Philippic, was never delivered at all.

The orator, as such, is merely the speaker. On a special occasion, to a limited audience, he appeals in order to sway their feeling, usually their action, upon the question of the hour. Of course the results may be endless in importance and duration. Yet his long career might be fully and nobly run, while no uttered word of his was ever recorded, by himself or by others, for the after time. In such a case he would stand quite outside the history of literature. His life's results, in the form of civic action, would be embedded, perchance even lost to sight, in the general upbuilding of his people or of mankind.

This fate has all but overtaken some protagonists in our Revolution, when orators played far larger and more heroic parts in the national drama than may ever again be assigned them. Patrick Henry and James Otis, like Pericles and Gorgias, barely

Oratory of  
the Revolu-  
tion a tradi-  
tion only.

appear in literature, as stately traditional figures, helped out by clever and pious fiction. A speech put by Webster into John Adams's mouth has outlived in the popular memory every word he actually uttered. Though Adams made a brave and successful legal plea for the soldiers who had but acted in self-defense in the "Boston massacre," it is only the rhetorical apotheosis of Crispus Attucks, and the other lawless "martyrs," by Warren, that is still remembered and recited.

Webster's  
reply to  
Hayne, 1830.

A speech, as delivered, even if accurately reported, is rarely literary in form. Webster's second reply to Hayne is widely accepted as the supreme effort of American eloquence. Certain passages are doubtless still familiar to every schoolboy, and may really have been, as is often asserted, the sheet anchors of Union sentiment ever since. Even the central theme, that no formal action of citizen, state, or section, no power short of popular revolution, can nullify the decrees of our national government, is surely large and far-reaching enough. But the speech itself, though its thirty thousand words would make a moderate volume, was an episode in a senatorial debate on the survey and sale of public lands. On every page are allusions which can be understood only by painful study of polities, persons, temporary conditions, long since forgotten. Hence it is read with interest, or read at all, as a whole, by very few.

Nevertheless, there are important contributions to our literature by orators, which can be best understood in connection with their professional careers. Professor Richardson names twelve men of national fame for eloquence since the Revolution: Randolph,

Clay, Webster, Calhoun, Choate, Everett, Winthrop, Seward, Garrison, Phillips, Sumner, and Lincoln. Not all these are even familiar names to-day.

The thin figure and piercing voice of John Randolph of Roanoke has vanished the faster from popular memory because, like Calhoun after him, he was the champion of the lost cause. Born a slaveholder, deplored the institution which impoverished his section, he yet felt that of the representatives of the free states "not one possesses the slightest tie of common feeling or of common interest with us." In the national Capitol itself he dared to exclaim: "However high we may carry our heads and strut and fret our hour, 'dressed in a little brief authority,' it is in the power of the states to extinguish this government at a blow."

John  
Randolph,  
1773-1833.

Calhoun also, his life long, avowed frankly his allegiance to his state, or at most to his section, regarding the union as a mere expedient, to be abandoned whenever it ceased to serve the interests of his real country. He is a gallant and loyal figure, as he recedes and fades from our view, like the French aristocrat of the old régime. We can admire his courage, but it is no longer easy even to recall his position. His cold, clear, logical style has its unique merits, though they are hardly oratorical. Like his political doctrines, his forms of utterance deserve careful study, but will never be revived or closely imitated. He is the second, but not a close second, among our political orators of the nineteenth century.

John Cald-  
well Cal-  
houn, 1782-  
1850.

Henry Clay, the idol of his section and party for a half century, had a unique personal charm, which has not lingered in his published words to any adequate

Henry Clay  
1777-1852.

extent. Indeed, to our permanent literature he is a far less important contributor than Calhoun. His own nature and the position of his border state made compromise, pacification, mediation, his lifelong rôle. It is the extremists that are best remembered.

Daniel  
Webster,  
1782-1852.

There can be no question as to the supreme importance of Webster in our oratory. Born and educated in poverty, he early became the leading lawyer of his native New Hampshire, and then of the Boston bar. His national career, as representative, senator, and Secretary of State, began in 1813 and lasted to the end. Inconsistent and wavering on some questions, Webster always gave his voice and vote to strengthen and preserve the federal Union. There is a splendid and sincere egotism, justified by the Jovelike nature of the man, in such passages as the thrice familiar "When my eyes shall be turned for the last time to behold the sun in heaven." He has given the name of Websterian to his own literary style, so stately in its simplicity, so suited to his clear, earnest, consistent thought, to his massive frame, great, cavernous eyes, and voice of thunder, that neither portentous length of periods nor freest use of polysyllabic words could make it seem other than fit and natural to the orator himself.

Oration at  
Bunker Hill,  
June 17,  
1825.

Plymouth  
Oration,  
1820.

Especially familiar to sons of New England is his apostrophe to the living veterans of Bunker Hill, actually present fifty years after the battle, at the laying of the corner stone of the monument. For such occasions as this and the speech on the Plymouth Pilgrims, indeed, the most picturesque rhetoric justifies itself when heard, and also upon the printed page, if only it successfully sets before us the original

scene. And certainly to us, also, those "venerable men" do visibly come down from that memorable day. Indeed, the personality of Webster, perhaps the most imposing man of our race, is so familiar to us through tradition, painting, and sculpture, if not from memory, that we still see and hear him as he points the finger of Fate at the trembling murderer, and thunders forth the words: "There is no escape from confession, save suicide: and suicide is confession!" His whole description of that murder is a masterpiece of imaginative word painting, with reminiscences of Macbeth glimmering here and there.

But, after all, it is not as a maker of phrases that Daniel Webster will be longest remembered, but as Hamilton's successor as the defender of the federal Constitution. Even his famous plea before the Supreme Court for his little Alma Mater, Dartmouth College, created the important precedent that the central government could enforce the observance by the several states of such implied contracts through charters as it had in this case been proposed to cancel. So when he refused to join the Free-Soil movement and gave in his adhesion to Clay's last compromise with the slave power, he was no doubt chiefly influenced by the longing to preserve the federation of states. If he did foresee the inevitable rupture, and merely desired, as he had said, to look with dying eyes on an unbroken Union, yet it is also true that his action, firmly taken against the known disapproval of New England, did postpone the war for a decade, while the North and West meantime increased decisively in wealth and population. As a great piece of oratory in itself, as the occasion for

Trial of the  
Knapps,  
1830.

Dartmouth  
College case  
1818.

March 7,  
1850.

Whittier's "Ichabod," as largely the inciting cause also of Mrs. Stowe's romance, this "Seventh of March Speech" may properly be mentioned here; but it only emphasizes the conclusion that Webster is a large figure rather in our history than in our literature. Who of us ever read the speech itself? The romance is familiar to all.

Wendell  
Phillips,  
1811-1884.

Wendell Phillips is the ideal and type of the aristocratic radical. Closely allied in kinship and in friendship with all the bluest blood and most exclusive culture of Boston, he cast in his lot with the little despised and persecuted group about Garrison, not merely without an instant's hesitation, but with eager delight. Mob violence, real peril of an ignominious death, could alone bring to him the true zest of life. Indeed, unless he could have a violently hostile audience to subdue to silence, and finally to entrance into delighted and even approving attention, the splendid powers of the man were not thoroughly awakened. A demagogue he could never be, for, to the end of his stormy days, wherever many men agreed with him, he felt oppressed as Daniel Boone by incoming settlers. Perhaps the finest literary effort of his life is his Phi Beta Kappa oration at Harvard, "The Scholar in a Republic." Even there he first antagonized and then conquered his audience, for he arraigned the college-bred man as habitually derelict to the highest ideals of citizenship. He was a happy Rough Rider, and never lost his delight in the strife.

Charles  
Sumner,  
1811-1874.

Charles Sumner could have been Story's worthy successor on the bench or in the Harvard Law School. He might have been a scholarly and in-

defatigable student, probably a writer, also, of history, like Motley. He was potentially all these things, indeed, before his gift for public speaking, and his moral enthusiasm for the crusade against slavery, drew him reluctantly into national politics.

His virulence in debate with Southern opponents was rhetorical, and, as it were, doctrinal, not really personal in feeling. He *preached* against slave-holders, as intolerantly as Cotton Mather against heretics. A study of his senatorial speeches would make more intelligible what nothing, of course, can justify: the attempt to silence him by the bludgeon. But he was always homesick for Ticknor's library, for Felton's lost friendship, for the social life among cultivated Bostonians, for the old studious quiet of the Law School. Sumner was never successful in his personal relations with men of diverse types and interests. It is as a scholarly essayist that he enters the gate of literature. Perhaps his first public speech, his fearless Fourth of July condemnation of all wars and warriors, called "The True Grandeur of Nations," is also his most lasting utterance.

Rufus Choate was famous, like Macaulay, for his marvelous memory and loquacity. He had a brief congressional career, was long a leader of the bar, a sparkling wit, a classical scholar, and an unwearying reader. Like Webster, Everett, Winthrop, and the scholarly Bostonians generally, he persistently refused to follow the rest of New England into the antislavery crusade, and, like Webster, died too early to be reunited with his people by the outbreak of civil war. His elaborate style is perhaps a valuable curiosity of literature.

Rufus  
Choate,  
1799-1859.

William  
Henry  
Seward,  
1801-1872.

Robert  
Charles  
Winthrop,  
1809-1894.

Edward  
Everett,  
1794-1865.

Seward is remembered as the creator of certain phrases like "the irrepressible conflict," rather than for his memorable utterance of them. Indeed, few would now reckon him among our prominent orators at all.

Robert C. Winthrop, the biographer of his more famous ancestor, was throughout his long life a public-spirited citizen, a student especially of New England history, a favorite speaker on memorial occasions. He illustrates the possible usefulness and happiness of an aristocratic nature in a democracy.

Far better known nationally is Edward Everett. It is rather amusing to note that he too began his career, at nineteen, as a Unitarian clergyman. We have seen him already as Ticknor's companion soon after in Göttingen, and his Greek colleague at Harvard. This position also he soon abandoned, to enter polities in 1825. He was later governor of Massachusetts, president of Harvard, Secretary of State. Finally, he was vice-presidential candidate on one of the three tickets opposed to Lincoln in the fall of 1860.

But Mr. Everett is known above all as our highest example of physical and mental charm and refinement, as a master of dazzling rhetoric, as the most graceful, finished, and artificial of orators. Emerson has left a glowing description of him as a young college professor, when he seemed to the raw, boyish students the embodiment of elegant scholarship. But the characteristic deadly thrust is added, that he was never suspected of originating an idea.

Everett's last public appearance is the most striking of all. His oration at Gettysburg, when the

national cemetery was dedicated, occupied several hours in delivery, had been most elaborately prepared, and seemed to his hearers one of the chief triumphs of his career. Then Mr. Lincoln spoke for less than five minutes, touching the deeper meaning of the occasion with all the simple mastery of an inspired lyric poet. It appears to us now as if then and there had occurred the sudden passing of an oratorical style, the unforeseen close of an epoch in taste : for few of us have ever read or seen Everett's speech ; most of us know Lincoln's by heart, as Mr. Everett promptly and chivalrously prophesied. Yet of course no such instantaneous change was possible. Lincoln had simply struck, with infinitely more skill and mastery, the unique note of the hour and place, setting them in their true relation to the eternal forces of life. The second inaugural is hardly less a masterpiece.

November,  
19, 1863.

Abraham  
Lincoln,  
1809-1865.

But it is undoubtedly a fact, that the influence of political oratory, at least, has waned decisively since the day, not merely of Otis and Warren, but of Webster, Calhoun, and Clay. The causes are in part the rise of the newspaper and the telegraph. The debater in Congress nowadays has already given his manuscript to the Associated Press, and is chiefly concerned that what he might have said shall be duly spread next morning on the breakfast table of his constituents, or even of the country.

On questions of general and permanent policy, both daily papers and weekly or monthly magazines keep up unceasing debate. The lack of such agencies multiplied the power of the living voice in the Revolutionary epoch. Even in the years of the anti-

Decay of  
oratory.

slavery agitation, such a paper as the *Liberator*, poems like Whittier's or Hosea Biglow's, a romance like "Uncle Tom's Cabin," were doubtless more influential than any spoken words. Still, personal magnetism will never lose its charm. In particular, the peculiar conditions under which our presidential candidates are nominated still recall vividly the earlier days. No longer ago than 1896 a single burst of rhetoric took a national convention by storm. Every town meeting may have a similar experience.

But, as a rule, in our comparatively settled and crowded social life, the motives of self-interest grow more complex, and men refuse to be swept to instant decision and emotional action. Where no serious doubt or deep-seated difference of opinion bars the way, men's feelings can still be inflamed by the devices of rhetoric and elocution. The court room, for instance, and the church remain as free fields for personal appeal.

Theodore Parker,  
1810-1860.  
Henry Ward Beecher,  
1813-1887.

Phillips Brooks,  
1835-1893.

Theodore Parker and Henry Ward Beecher are perhaps the most famous masters of pulpit oratory, which usually presupposes devoted and submissive hearers. Yet both were at least as willing to face a hostile audience, and to champion an unfashionable and dangerous cause, as they did, in particular, in the early Abolitionist days. The pervasive, benignant influence of Phillips Brooks, not limited to any religious, sectional, or even national line, was in a degree oratorical. His published essays, both purely religious and relatively secular, are exquisitely literary, often highly poetic in quality. They are full of vitality and force, even for those men who cannot supply from memory the monumental pres-

ence, the impetuous rushing tones, of the great preacher. In his optimism, his humanism, his patriotic and philanthropic zeal, Bishop Brooks was a true successor of Channing. Both have relatively humble places in our literature, yet their influence is felt constantly in the air we breathe. That is merely saying that literature, or any fine art, is but a partial expression of life.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Calhoun's Works, in 6 vols. Life by Von Holst in American Statesmen Series, Houghton. Life of Clay by Schurz in same series. Daniel Webster's "Works," 6 vols., Little. "Life," by George Ticknor Curtis, 2 vols., Appleton. "Life," by H. C. Lodge, Houghton. There is an excellent brief account of Webster by Carl Schurz in the Warner "Library of the World's Best Literature." "Randolph of Roanoke," a poem by Whittier. "Scholar in a Republic," by Wendell Phillips, Lee. "Speeches, Lectures, and Letters" of Phillips, 2 vols., Lee. "Works" of Charles Sumner, 15 vols., Lee. "Charles Sumner," a memorial oration, by Carl Schurz, Lee. "Orations" of Everett, 4 vols., Little. "Lincoln," complete works, Nicolay and Hay, 2 vols., Century. "Speeches," by Chittenden, Dodd. Phillips Brooks's "Essays and Addresses," Dutton. "Sermons," Dutton. Randolph, Calhoun, and Clay are peculiarly picturesque figures, but hardly in our field. Professor W. P. Trent has a happy subject in his "Southern Statesmen of the Old Régime."

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM WORK

The historical importance of Webster's Dartmouth College speech and reply to Hayne may be most fully understood from Lodge's account. The Bunker Hill and Plymouth orations should be read entire.

The scene at Gettysburg is a peculiarly dramatic one. The extraordinary force of Lincoln's oratory should be fully explained, if possible. Every schoolboy should know the speech by heart, and be perfectly familiar with the Second Inaugural oration.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES — (1830–1870)

## 1831–1840

American History	American Literature
	1831. Jan. 1, First number of Garrison's <i>Liberator</i> . Poe's Poems. Whittier's "Legends of New England." Paulding's "Dutchman's Fireside."
1832. Nullification in South Carolina.	Irving's "Alhambra." Paulding's "Westward Ho."
	1833. Mrs. Child's "Appeal for Africans." Whittier's "Justice and Expediency." Longfellow's "Outre-Mer." Story's "Commentaries on the Constitution."
	1834. Paulding's "Life of Washington."
	1835. William Ellery Channing's "Slavery." Drake's "Culprit Fay." Kennedy's "Horseshoe Robinson." Simms's "Yemassee," and "Partisan."
	1836. Mrs. Child's "Philothea." Emerson's "Nature." Gray's "Botany." First Meetings of Transcendental Club.
	1837. Emerson's Phi Beta Kappa oration, "The American." Hawthorne's "Twice-told Tales." Prescott's "Ferdinand and Isabella."
	1838. Cooper's "Homeward Bound," "Home as Found." Lowell's Class Poem.
	1839. W. E. Channing's "Self-Culture." Cooper's "History of the United States Navy." Longfellow's "Hyperion," "Voices of the Night."

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES — (1830-1870)

## 1831-1840

English and European Literature	English and European History
1831. Goethe's "Faust" completed.	
1832. Death of Goethe.	1832. Reform Bill passed by Parliament.
1833. Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus." Browning's "Pauline." Newman's "Tracts for the Times." Tennyson's Poems.	
1834. Dickens's "Sketches by Boz."	
1835. Browning's "Paracelsus."	
1836. Dickens's "Pickwick." Marryat's "Midshipman Easy."	
1837. Dickens's "Oliver Twist." Carlyle's "French Revolution." Thackeray's "Yellowplush Papers."	1837. Accession of Victoria.
1838. Dickens's "Nicholas Nickleby."	

1831-1840 — *Continued*

American History	American Literature
	1840. Cooper's "Pathfinder." R. H. Dana, Jr.'s "Two Years Before the Mast." Lowell's "A Year's Life."
	1840-1844. <i>The Dial</i> , edited by Margaret Fuller, afterward by Emerson.
	1840. Brook Farm Community organized.

## 1841-1850

1842. Ashburton Treaty, fixing our northern boundary.	1841. Emerson's Essays, I. Longfellow's Ballads. ("Ex-celsior.") <i>New York Tribune.</i> 1842. Emerson's "Threnody." Longfellow's Poems on Slavery. Bryant's "Fountain." Cooper's "Wing-and-Wing."
1844. First telegraph line, from Washington to Baltimore.	1843. Longfellow's "Spanish Student." Poems of W. E. Channing, 2d. T. W. Parson's "Dante's Inferno," Nos. I-X. Prescott's "Mexico."
1845. Admission of Texas.	1844. Mrs. Child's "Flowers for Children." Emerson's Essays, II. Margaret Fuller's "Woman in the Nineteenth Century." 1845. Poe's "Raven." Judd's "Margaret." Lowell's "Conversations on Poets." Simms's "Wigwam and Cabin."
1846. Ether used in Massachusetts Hospital. 1846-1847. War with Mexico. Annexation of California.	1846. Cooper's "Lives of Naval Officers." Bayard Taylor's "Views Afoot." Longfellow's "Belfrey of Bruges." Worcester's "Dictionary." Sumner's Phi Beta Kappa Oration.

1831-1840 — *Continued*

English and European Literature	English and European History
1840. Dickens's "Old Curiosity Shop." Browning's "Sordello."	1840. Penny Postage in Great Britain.

## 1841-1850

1841. Carlyle's "Hero Worship." Hugh Miller's "Old Red Sandstone." Boucicault's "London Assurance." <i>Punch</i> founded.	
1842. Dickens's "American Notes." Macaulay's "Lays." Darwin's "Coral Reefs." <i>George Sand's "Consuelo."</i>	
1843. Browning's "Blot on the Scutcheon." Carlyle's "Past and Present." Dickens's "Martin Chuzzlewit" and "Christmas Carol." Mill's "Logic."	
1843-1860. Ruskin's "Modern Painters."	
1844. Stanley's "Life of Arnold." Thackeray's "Barry Lyndon."	
1845. Carlyle's "Cromwell."	
1846. Grote's "Greece," Vol. I.	1846. Abolition of the Corn Laws.

1841-1850 — *Continued*

American History	American Literature
1847. Salt Lake City founded by the Mormons.	1847. Longfellow's "Evangeline." Prescott's "Peru." Melville's "Omoo."
1849. Gold discovered in California.	1848. Gayarré's "Romance of the History of Louisiana." Lowell's "Biglow Papers," First Series, "Fable for Critics," and "Sir Launfal."
1850. Fugitive Slave Law, as part of Clay's last compromise.	1849. Cary Sisters' Poems. Hildreth's "History," Vol. I. Irving's "Goldsmith." Thoreau's "Concord and Merrimac." Ticknor's "Spanish Literature."
	1850. Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter." Webster's Seventh of March Speech. Emerson's "Representative Men." Irving's "Mahomet." Longfellow's "Seaside and Fireside." D. G. Mitchell's "Reveries of a Bachelor." Whittier's "Songs of Labor" and "Ichabod." <i>Harper's Magazine</i> founded. Miss Warner's "Wide, Wide World."

## 1851-1860

1851. Hawthorne's "House of Seven Gables," "Wonder-Book," "Snow Image." Longfellow's "Golden Legend."
D. G. Mitchell's "Dream Life." Parkman's "Pontiac." Schoolcraft's "Indian Tribes." Lossing's "Fieldbook of the Revolution."
Curtis's "Nile Notes."
1851-1852. Mrs. Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

1841-1850 — *Continued*

English and European Literature	English and European History
1847. Charlotte Brontë's "Jane Eyre." Tennyson's "Princess." Thackeray's "Vanity Fair."	
1848. Clough's "Bothie." Mill's "Political Economy."	1848. Revolution at Paris. Expulsion of Louis Philippe.
1849. Dickens's "David Copperfield." Thackeray's "Pendennis." Ruskin's "Seven Lamps of Architecture."	
1850. Tennyson's "In Memoriam." Mrs. Browning's "Sonnets from the Portuguese." Newman's "Phases of Faith."	

## 1851-1860

1851. Mrs. Browning's "Casa Guidi Windows." Kingsley's "Yeast." Ruskin's "Stones of Venice," I.	
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1851-1860 — *Continued*

American History	American Literature
1852. Death of Webster and Clay.	1852. Hawthorne's "Blithedale Romance."
1854. Repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Slavery question left to inhabitants of each new state.	1853. Theodore Parker's "Theism, Atheism, and Popular Theology." Choate's "Eulogy on Webster."
1854-1859. Civil war in Kansas between proslavery and free settlers.	1854. Thoreau's "Walden." Bayard Taylor's "Poems of the Orient." Longfellow's "Hiawatha."
1856. Assault on Charles Sumner in the Senate chamber.	1855. J. S. C. Abbott's "History of Napoleon." T. S. Arthur's "Ten Nights in a Barroom." Frederick Douglass's "My Bondage and My Freedom." Ingraham's "Prince of the House of David."
1857. Dred Scott decision. Business panic.	1855-1858. Prescott's "Life of Philip II."
1859. John Brown seizes Harper's Ferry. Is captured and executed. Petroleum found in Pennsylvania.	1855-1859. Irving's "Life of Washington."
1860. November, election of Lincoln. December 20, secession of South Carolina.	1856. Motley's "Dutch Republic." Boker's "Plays and Poems." Curtis's "Prue and I." Emerson's "English Traits." Mrs. Stowe's "Dred."
	1857. F. J. Child's "English and Scottish Ballads," Vol. I. November, first number of <i>Atlantic Monthly</i> .
	1858. Longfellow's "Miles Standish." Holland's "Bittersweet." Dr. Holmes's "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table."
	1860. Emerson's "Conduct of Life." Hawthorne's "Marble Faun." Motley's "United Netherlands."

1851-1860 — *Continued*

English and European Literature	English and European History
1852. Thackeray's "Henry Esmond." Charles Reade's "Peg Woffington."	1852. Napoleon III becomes emperor.
1853. Thackeray's "English Humorists."	1853-1856. Crimean War.
Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford."	
1854. Thackeray's "Newcomes," Dickens's "Hard Times."	
1855. Browning's "Men and Women." Dickens's "Little Dorrit." Kingsley's "Westward Ho." Tennyson's "Maud." Spencer's "Psychology." Milman's "Latin Christianity."	
1856. Mrs. Browning's "Aurora Leigh." Froude's "England," Vols. I and II. Mrs. Craik's "John Halifax."	
1857. Hughes's "Tom Brown's Schooldays." Thackeray's "Virginians." Buckle's "History of Civilization," Vol. I.	1857-1858. Indian mutiny.
1858. Carlyle's "Frederick the Great." George Eliot's "Scenes of Clerical Life." William Morris's "Defense of Guinevere." Tennyson's "Idylls of the King."	
1859. Dickens's "Tale of Two Cities." George Eliot's "Adam Bede." Fitzgerald's "Omar Khayyám." Meredith's "Richard Feverel." Mill, "On Liberty."	
Darwin's "Origin of Species."	
1860. George Eliot's "Mill on the Floss." Collins's "Woman in White." Owen Meredith's "Lucile." Reade's "Cloister and Hearth." Tolstoi's "War and Peace."	

## 1861-1870

American History	American Literature
1861. Secession of eleven states. 1861-1865. Civil War. 1861. Fall of Fort Sumter. Battle of Bull Run. 1862. Farragut at New Orleans.	1861. Holmes's "Elsie Venner." Winthrop's "Cecil Dreeme."
1863. Emancipation Proclamation. 1863. July 4, Grant at Vicksburg. Battle of Gettysburg. French in Mexico.	1862. Mrs. Stowe's "Agnes of Sorrento." Story's "Roba di Roma." Winthrop's "John Brent" and "Canoe and Saddle." 1863. Longfellow's "Wayside Inn." Hawthorne's "Our Old Home." Higginson's "Outdoor Papers." Bayard Taylor's "Hannah Thurston."
1865. Surrender of Lee. Abolition of slavery. Murder of Lincoln.	1863. Trowbridge's "Cudjo's Cave." Winthrop's "Life in the Open Air." Lincoln's Speech at Gettysburg, Nov. 19th. 1864. Lowell's "Fireside Travels." Thoreau's "Maine Woods." Boker's War Poems.
1867. Maximilian shot in Mexico.	1865. Lowell's "Commemoration Ode." Thoreau's "Cape Cod." Parkman's "Pioneers of France." 1866. Whittier's "Snow-Bound." Taylor's "Kennett." Howells's "Venetian Life." 1867. Emerson's "May Day." Holmes's "Guardian Angel." Longfellow's "Dante." Parson's "Dante's Inferno." Norton's "Dante's Vita Nuova." Whittier's "Tent on the Beach." Lowell's "Biglow Papers," II. Whitney's "Language." Lea's "Sacerdotal Celibacy." Parkman's "Jesuits in North America."
1868. Impeachment of President Johnson fails.	1868. Longfellow's "New England Tragedies." Hale's "Man without a Country."

## 1861-1870

English and European Literature	English and European History
1861. Thackeray's "Philip." George Eliot's "Silas Marner." Maine's "Ancient Law." Mill's "Representative Government."	1861. Emancipation of Russian serfs. Victor Emanuel king of Italy.
1862. Victor Hugo's "Les Misérables."	
1863. George Eliot's "Romola." Kingsley's "Water Babies."	
1864. Tennyson's "Enoch Arden." Swinburne's "Atalanta." Dickens's "Mutual Friend." Newman's "Apologia."	
1865. Carroll's "Alice in Wonderland." Meredith's "Rhoda Fleming." Seeley's "Ecce Homo." Arnold's "Essays in Criticism."	
1866. George Eliot's "Felix Holt." Bryce's "Holy Roman Empire." Swinburne's "Poems and Ballads." Victor Hugo's "Toilers of the Sea." Freeman's "Norman Conquest."	1866. War between Prussia and Austria. Italians occupy Venice.
1867. William Morris's "Jason." 1868. William Morris's "Earthly Paradise." George Eliot's "Spanish Gypsy." Browning's "The Ring and the Book."	

1861-1870 — *Continued*

American History	American Literature
1869-1877. Grant president.	1868. Greeley's "Recollections." Miss Alcott's "Little Women." Miss Phelps's "Gates Ajar." 1869. Twain's "Innocents Abroad." Higginson's "Army Life in a Black Regiment." Parkman's "La Salle." 1870. Bret Harte's "Luck of Roaring Camp." Lowell's "Cathedral" and "Among my Books." Bryant's "Iliad." Taylor's "Faust," Part I. Warner's "Summer in a Garden."

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1861-1870 — *Continued*

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English and European Literature	English and European History
1869. Blackmore's "Lorna Doone." Arnold's "Culture and Anarchy."	
1870. Dante Rossetti's Poems.	1870. Franco-Prussian War. Fall of Napoleon III. Republic in France.

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PART III  
THE NATIONAL EPOCH



## CHAPTER I

### GENERAL CONDITIONS

WE have seen, that throughout the seventeenth century and most of the eighteenth, our serious culture and literary utterance were to be found, if at all, chiefly in theocratic and democratic New England. The epoch of revolution brought to the front a notable group of statesmen, orators, publicists, mostly bred in the more aristocratic conditions of Virginia. Benjamin Franklin, shrewd and thrifty, practical-minded student of human nature and of science, is the first large and truly national figure in our literature. His flight from Boston is less important than his revolt against the narrowing Puritanism of the Mathers. His time was perhaps an age of action so strenuous and all-absorbing that the imagination could hardly claim its rights.

The early decades of the nineteenth century found us still English, indeed still timidly provincial, in all save political relations. Even the creative artists, Brown, Irving, Cooper, began by avowedly copying English models, good or bad. They, and their friends, however, clearly indicate that in and about New York something like genial conditions for literature earliest appeared.

But meanwhile the generation of Channing in New England was bursting the outgrown fetters of

the spirit. Without losing aught of serious devotion or unresting energy, the home-keeping children of the Puritans began to throw much of their force into free thought and its artistic expression. So the group led by Emerson and closed by Lowell were long the masters in American letters. It was a growth from deep and firm local roots, as nearly all the materials of Hawthorne's art, the whole career of Whittier, the Biglow poems, constantly illustrate. It is the clearest mark of Lowell's greatness, that he dropped his "pack of 'isms," outgrew his earlier limitations to become the poet, orator, the welcome ambassador plenipotentiary, of our national character, culture, and letters to Spain, to England, to the world.

The epoch here indicated as the New England period opens about 1830, and its peculiar energy was merged at last into the far greater upheaval of the Civil War. In those very decades, the largest outward activity was the winning of the West; but even that took largely the form of a struggle between the peculiar institution of the South and the anti-slavery convictions of New England. Not only free Kansas, but the other free states of the Northwest, were its visible result. When the actual appeal to arms came, the overwhelming force of the West overbalanced the gains of slave territory from the Mexican War, and decided the issue. Before the strife ended, the center of population, the political power, had shifted far away from both the older sections: from Baltimore toward southern Indiana. Lincoln, indeed, was a providential accident, a compromise candidate, elected against a divided majority. But

it is no mere accident, that of all our presidents chosen since, one has come from western New York, the rest from the central West.

These last three decades (1870-1900) are doubtless no less epochal. The political results of the war are assured. There is to be but one Anglo-Saxon nation on this continent. At the very close of the century, the brief struggle with Spain has left us one happy result, in effacing all vestige of hostile feeling between the veterans of the greater fraternal contest.

The literature we are striving to create, then, is to be truly national. We are already remote indeed from the closing words of Hosea Biglow's first utterance:—

“Ef I'd *my way* I hed ruther  
We should go to work an' part . . .  
Man hed ough' to put asunder  
Them thet God has noways jined;  
An' I shouldn't gretly wonder  
Ef there's thousands o' my mind.”

If there be any Separatist or strong sectional feeling, the cleavage is traceable, to-day, rather between West and East. Even our gravest political and social problems, the struggle between advocates of gold and silver, the tariff questions, the threatening combinations of labor and capital, are quite without relation to Mason and Dixon's line.

The financial center is still Manhattan, which indeed in these last years has almost taken the place of London as the heart of the world's wealth, “the power-house of the line.” Two other unique conditions existing at the mouth of the Hudson must be

Centraliza-  
tion of the  
book trade.

alluded to. It is the chief dumping ground for the unassimilated immigrants from all lands, and the home of nearly all our leading magazines, secular and religious weeklies, of the wealthiest newspapers, and of the book trade proper. Even the *New England Magazine* itself has just removed thither from Boston.

Our reading public has increased enormously. The demand for light fiction, in particular, seems unlimited, and the supply is no less copious. Great cleverness is shown in making attractive the many illustrated magazines, while the weekly and daily papers are reaching into the same field. The larger romance in book form also wins readers by the hundred thousand. Each year a popular hit, itself perhaps an accident, brings as its reward, if not wealth, a larger income than Hawthorne or Mrs. Stowe ever attained.

Most of this output is not regarded by any critic, nor by the thrifty, keen-witted craftsmen who produce it, as a serious contribution to permanent literature. It is not usually foul or vicious, but neither is it instructive and elevating. It is simply manufactured to sell.

Commercial  
spirit in  
literature.

For the less successful, every sort of hack work stands as a besetting temptation. The roaring metropolis, the spirit of commercialism, the craving for sudden fame and for luxurious expenditure, undoubtedly engulf many, who a half-century ago would have been maturing quietly in villages. Perhaps among them are lost Emersons and Hawthornes. The earlier conditions are swept away forever. The older American forces in our population are scat-

tered, the commingling of new elements hardly begun. We are confronting strange and serious conditions.

The immigrants, and even their children, contribute relatively little to our best thought and expression. The failure of our German element, in particular, to give itself utterance in the highest forms of art, is emphasized by such brilliant apparent exceptions as Schurz, von Holst, and Francke, all of whom came to us in mature life and are German still. Emma Lazarus, the loyal Jewish poetess, and the rich Keltic imagination of Miss Guiney, are real though not large exceptions. The career of Boyesen is still more remarkable, since he acquired our language in mature life and developed a pure but independent English style. As he remembered and described his Norwegian boyhood, so Dr. Charles Eastman, an educated American physician, has recorded his own childhood and youth in a wigwam — for he is a full-blooded Sioux. A far more important record of a larger life is Booker Washington's "Up from Slavery," which recalls Frederick Douglass's "My Bondage and My Freedom." These are, however, all really minor figures. Our literature, much more distinctly than our national life, as a whole, is Anglo-Saxon still.

Whatever the reasons, most philosophic observers feel that our full national union, and expansion, have as yet by no means brought with them adequate literary expression; that the successful authors of our day are indeed tenfold more numerous, but also individually less important, than those of the previous generation ; and that poetry, in particular,

Emma  
Lazarus,  
1849-1887.  
Louise  
Imogen  
Guiney,  
1861.  
H. H.  
Boyesen,  
1848-1895.

has lost much of its influence on the national life.  
This may be an age of normal transition,

“The rest of the wind, between the flaws that blow.”

Possibly this leveling tendency of prosperous democracy is, after all, beneficent. We all read, and nearly all think we can write. The average intelligence at least, if not the average taste, is swiftly rising. Our time may be like Franklin's and Washington's, a period of action so compact that the imagination cannot now come to her due. Finally, much that seems now so novel may be but a delusion of perspective. Possibly each age repeats, that “there were giants in those days,” while we are pygmies in comparison; that the men before us could lead lives more restful, less complex, and so completer and happier than our own! At any rate, this final chapter must have the vagueness, doubtless too the distortion, of a photographic foreground,—though by no means its disproportionate share of space. Brevity is doubly necessary, because most of the men and women of note in our letters, younger than Lowell, are still living, and happily active in good works.

It is apparent that our country is destined to be the most populous and powerful in that natural alliance of English-speaking nations which, with minor differences but in the consciousness of close kinship, is coming to dominate the world. It is probable, therefore, that our national literature may yet be more and more closely associated with that of England and of her colonies in a form equally under-

stood, and accepted as their own, by the greater part of mankind. Some signs of that far-off day may even be already pointed out.

Franklin himself may be regarded as a homely cosmopolitan figure, the first prophet of that thrifty economic spirit which now dictates the combined or divergent action of nations in China, Africa, and indeed all the world over. From the next generation we might mention Payne, who acted in England and Scotland as much as at home, dying at last in Tunis. Of his sixty plays and operas only one strain of plaintive music is remembered, but that, surely, is equally familiar all the world over, wherever the Anglo-Saxon pitches his moving tent. "Home, Sweet Home" was originally a part of the opera "Clari, the Maid of Milan." Artist-authors like Allston have naturally migrated toward Italy.

Irving, Story, Taylor, the younger Hawthorne, Leland, might be thought of as more or less cosmopolitan, but no one of them is a perfectly satisfactory illustration. Of course we do not refer to the elaborate transplanting of himself to a more congenial social habitat, so successfully accomplished by the author of "Valentino" and "Sforza," nor to the easy crossing of our invisible northern frontier line by, for instance, the welcome pilgrim from "The Forge in the Forest." The long exile of William J. Stillman, artist, essayist, agitator, archæologist, hardly weakened his sturdy patriotism, but it did at least enable him to take a most independent objective view of his own youth, parents, and early environment generally, in his remarkable autobiography. The memories, the stories, and the allegiance of

John Howard Payne,  
1792-1852.

Julian  
Hawthorne,  
1846-

William  
Waldorf  
Astor,  
1848-  
Charles  
G. D.  
Roberts,  
1860-  
William  
James  
Stillman,  
1828-1901.

Francis  
Eliza  
(Hodgson)  
Burnett,  
1849-

Henry  
James, Jr.,  
1843-

Francis  
Marion  
Crawford,  
1854-

Mrs. Burnett are quite equally divided, and a certain international breadth of view is often felt in her work. Even in the popular favorite of childhood, "Lord Fauntleroy," the charms of life as a democrat in a democracy, and as a great lord of the manor, are perhaps fairly balanced. This writer's Anglo-American quality, however, is chiefly an accident of birth and involuntary migration.

The younger Henry James appears to have withdrawn his roots almost wholly from his native soil, without fixing them firmly anywhere else. But his lifelong devotion to psychological analysis seems in danger of making his view of all living men and women more like to pathological microscopy than to any ordinary human sympathy. He is a man of genius, unique in his methods, and must be studied attentively. Much of his work seems to be, even more clearly than Browning's, a step over the border from literature into science.

Far more easily enjoyed is the work of Mr. Crawford. His aim, indeed, is rarely much higher than a refined and superficial diversion of his reader. In his many romances he has hardly revealed any deep convictions as to character and life. But his subjects, treatment, sympathies, are broadly cosmopolitan. He is least natural, and least happy, in his American stories and characters. Indeed, we may suspect that he is really and fully "at home" only on Italian soil. It would be an interesting query, what spot of earth the phrase actually calls up to him, or even in what language he habitually dreams. In recent years Mr. Crawford has carried the graces of a romancer's style into historical works on Rome and Sicily. His

"Via Crucis" is an ideal "historical novel" on a safe yet inspiring theme, the crusades.

A still better example lies near our hand, and perhaps not quite out of reach. Mr. Kipling was born of English parents, as were many of our fellow-citizens, and much farther away than we, in almost every sense, from London. He has said more savage things about us than even Mr. Lowell. While the latter took the bitter mention of his home-country as "the Land of Broken Promise" out of his Agassiz poem, so the only notable utterance, doubtless, of Kipling's which he ever suppressed was the quatrain of his "Song of the English," intimating that our national bird is but a greedy and unclean vulture.

But Mr. Kipling's half-American family are surely of "his own caste, race, and breed," as he puts it in the tale of Trejago's folly. But for the death of one American kinsman, or the behavior of another, they might still have their permanent home among us. In "Captains Courageous" he has set forth the speech, the way of life and thought, the living shapes of "mine own people," the Yankee fisher folk, more vividly, if not more accurately, than any native poet or spinner of yarns has ever done. His patriotism is almost as much racial as national. He probably neither understands nor loves old England as fully as did Mr. Lowell. Wolcott Balestier, had he lived, would perhaps have hastened and shared the evolution of an international, or even an Americanized, Kipling.

Another man of English birth is of late years often mentioned in the same breath with Kipling. Mr. Thompson-Seton has aided materially in widening the range of our sympathies beyond the limits

Rudyard  
Kipling,  
born in  
Bombay,  
1865.  
Wolcott  
Balestier,  
1861-1891.  
"Captains  
Coura-  
geous," 1897

even of universal humanity. Many centuries before Coleridge's albatross was slain, moralists and poets had preached to us our kinship with all the ruder forms of organic life. The belief in transmigration of souls from tree or beast to man enforces such teachings. The werewolf, the satyr, the centaur, the hamadryad, the deliberately invented animal-fable that bears Æsop's name, had repeated the same lesson.

Yet these two authors, both still young, are the first, if we except an occasional sketch like Charles Dudley Warner's "Hunting of the Deer," to enlist our sympathies fully on the side of the beast. They are quite independent of each other. The love and loyalty of Lobo to Bianca is offered to us as absolute realism, while the tale of Bagheera's and Kaa's friendship for Mowgli is frankly poetic and idealized. Of course both writers really ascribe human sentiments to creatures beyond the reach of our full comprehension. Yet the artistic charm, freshness, and value of this new field can hardly be overstated.

Such careers as these do not quite belong within the limits of any one national life. They are likely to grow more frequent and typical. Much more clearly cosmopolitan are the great historical essays of Irving, Prescott, Motley, and perhaps even of Parkman. We must, however, return to our better-defined theme.

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## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE OF THE SOUTH

THE more inspiring the future of our race and speech, the more imperative becomes our duty to record, to preserve, to understand, whatever is best in our past. This is especially true and pressing as to the old life of the South. While the North and West suffered terrible loss, and were profoundly modified, through the Civil War, the cataclysm was for the South all but destructive. That vanished phase of our civilization was the most picturesque, indeed the most retarded and mediæval, form of Anglo-Saxon life then existing. The contrasts and interrelations between Black and White were perhaps as effective there as in India, though no Kipling, but only a hostile Nemesis in the person of Mrs. Stowe, arose to give them adequate artistic expression. Indeed, the South, before the war, vaguely conscious of hostile criticism from all sides, shrank even from friendly revelation or discussion of its real social conditions. Mrs. Eastman's "Aunt Phillis's Cabin, or Southern Life as It Is," was a natural though ineffectual retort under extreme provocation, but probably never had much sale in the Southern states. Even to-day, such an author as Page or Harris reaches, through Yankee publishers, an audience nine-tenths of whom are alien to the writer's own traditions.

Hence we were in imminent danger of losing the

Mary  
(Hender-  
son)  
Eastman,  
1818-

materials for a full understanding of that vanished life. Much that ought even now to be promptly done requires capacity less rare than the poet's or romancer's. Indeed, for the future student, a faithful collection like Drake's "New England Legends and Folklore" may be more useful than the most conscientious studies of local detail in the form of fiction, like Mrs. Austin's "Standish of Standish." A few truthful if crude sketches, like Judge Longstreet's "Georgia Scenes" or Baldwin's "Flush Times in Alabama and Mississippi," antedate the war.

Samuel  
Adams  
Drake,  
1833–  
Augustus  
Baldwin  
Longstreet,  
1790–1870.  
Joseph G.  
Baldwin,  
1811–1864.

Theodore  
O'Hara,  
1820–1867.

Philip  
Pendleton  
Cooke,  
1816–1850.  
Richard  
Henry  
Wilde,  
1789–1847.  
Edward  
Coate  
Pinkney,  
1802–1828.  
Stephen  
Collins  
Foster,  
1826–1864.

The purely literary output of the Southern states has not been large, and the quality even of the best work is rather uneven. Thus O'Hara's ringing stanzas, called "The Bivouac of the Dead," were actually composed over a handful of gallant but unknown Kentuckians, who fell in a cause not now generally defended as worthy, at Buena Vista. Some even of these verses deserve only oblivion. But some, again, have been inscribed on soldiers' monuments the world around, and may well be intoned, as the dirge of martial heroes, till war shall be known no more. In other cases even a single airy rhyme like Cooke's "Florence Vane," or Wilde's "My Life is like a Summer Rose," will hardly survive much longer. Pinkney's name and songs are perhaps somewhat less strange to our ears. Most remarkable is it that Stephen C. Foster, who at nineteen wrote "Old Folks at Home," and later in life composed "Suwanee River," "Old Kentucky Home," etc., was born in Pennsylvania and lived in New York City; where, also, originated, still earlier, the name and refrain of "Dixie." On the other hand it must

not be forgotten that we owe our chief national song, "The Star-Spangled Banner," to Francis Key of Maryland.

Francis  
Scott Key,  
1780-1843.

The Civil War produced no Southern war chant of such inspiring power as Mrs. Howe's "Battle Hymn of the Republic," while defeat was too crushing, and long too bitter, to make possible any utterance fairly responsive to Francis M. Finch's

Julia Ward  
Howe, 1819-

"Love and tears for the Blue,  
Tears and love for the Gray."

Francis  
Miles Finch,  
1827-

On the other hand, no Northern poetry could have the strength of that despairing regret long felt, and uttered, by the vanquished. We may even be glad that Will Thompson fought on the losing side at Gettysburg, since he could not else have

Will Henry  
Thompson,  
1848-

"heard across the tempest loud  
The death cry of a nation lost!"  
(Stedman's "Anthology," pp. 508-509.)

Especially identified with the lost cause are the lyrics of Father Ryan, notably "The Sword of Lee" and "The Conquered Banner." We can all repeat now:—

"Furl that banner softly, slowly!  
Treat it gently—it is holy,  
For it droops above the dead."

The best-known group of Southern poets of the war period is centered about a veteran as grizzled, picturesque, and fearless as the Mark Twain of to-day.

William Gilmore Simms, a large, generous, and lovable man, made a lifelong but unsuccessful attempt to earn a subsistence from his pen. In his best days his readers were chiefly in the North. Indeed,

William  
Gilmore  
Simms,  
1806-1870.

though so heartily devoted to his native Charleston, it was on his annual visits in Manhattan that he gained courage and won a market for his work, while his attempts to create Southern periodicals were all foredoomed to costly failure. Thus his great Indian romance, "Yemassee," and his Revolutionary tale, "The Partisan," were published, both in 1835, each in two volumes, in New York. Even so, the goodly estate of Woodlands, halfway from Charleston to Augusta, where his well-beloved anti-slavery guest, William Cullen Bryant, later saw Simms's negro slaves living in prosperous content, was acquired, still in the same year, not through literature at all, but by marriage. The story how Simms, bereft of income, several children, and wife, during the Civil War, finally saw his home and library of ten thousand books go up in fire during Sherman's march, is really tragic. Disheartened at last, he yet toiled steadily on with pen and voice to the very end.

Simms was imperfectly educated, never acquired the habit of revision, and was rarely allowed time to prepare even his materials and plots. His strong, crude, swift style has none of the finer graces necessary for poetry. His imagination, however, is at times almost Titanic. The great scenes in "Yemassee," especially, suffice to set him far above any romancer of his type save, perhaps, Cooper. In such passages his Indians appeal to us with resistless power, however unreal they may be. But even in that book there are wearisome and useless characters, weak, dragging scenes, and others full of fruitless horrors. Reticence, artistic restraint, polish, were meaningless

words to Simms. Yet his character and work are both important for all thoughtful Americans.

In the later fifties a little social and literary club used to meet in Charleston, perhaps chiefly to hear its president, Simms, discourse largely on letters and all other topics. Among the members were Professor Gildersleeve,—then fresh from his German university, and now our most widely known classical scholar,—Henry Timrod, and Paul Hayne. Each of these three lost, like their leader, all save hope, in the Civil War. Timrod was the son of an intelligent Charleston mechanic, a bookbinder, who had himself a gift for verse, best employed in a ringing protest against Nullification in 1833, a poem which seems surely to be from Whittier's inkstand : —

“ Sons of the Union, rise!  
Stand ye not recreant by.”

In the son the refinement, the intense idealism, the sensitive taste, of the poet were as predominant as they were wanting in Simms. Escaping from the hated practice of law, he found no professorship like Lowell, but a humble career as a private tutor. It is pleasant to recall that Ticknor and Fields published his few verses in 1860. In 1864 he became the happy editor of a paper in Columbia, a husband, and a father. Next year his son died, Columbia was destroyed by Sherman's army, Timrod was reduced to utter poverty, if not to absolute starvation.

The little volume of three to four thousand verses, published with a loving memoir by Hayne, in 1873, includes some of our purest lyric utterances. Among

Basil  
Lanneau  
Gilder-  
sleeve, 1831-  
William H.  
Timrod,  
1792-1838.  
  
Henry  
Timrod,  
1829-1867.

the longer poems, "The Cotton Boll," with its true local color, is of far more value than the ambitious and early "Vision of Poesy," unless we can read out of the latter the singer's own inner story. But, especially, a fierce word now and then hurled at ourselves, like "ruffian foe," "the Goth," "the Hun," should nowise mar our full admiration for the war poetry of Timrod. He would have been a generous victor, though it seems a bolder prophetic creation of fancy than Macaulay's famous New Zealander, sketching the ruins of St. Paul, when he surely foresees that

"the Goth shall cling  
To his own blasted altar stones, and crave  
Mercy; and we shall grant it, and dictate  
The lenient future of his fate  
There, where some rotting ships and crumbling quays  
Shall one day mark the Port which ruled the Western seas."

Such feeling is already historic only, but "Spring," and especially "Christmas," with its refrain of "Peace, Peace," makes lasting appeal to all.

Paul  
Hamilton  
Hayne,  
1830-1886.

Hayne cheerfully accepts, for his dead friend, Richard H. Stoddard's judgment that Timrod was the ablest poet the South had produced. Though of the highest social rank, nephew and foster-son of that Robert Y. Hayne who faced Webster in the Senate, he shared his friend's utter poverty when the war ended. His sturdier strength enabled him to turn his back on the scene of havoc and later of negro misgovernment, and make a happy home for many years in a rude cabin among the pine barrens of Georgia. He has left ten times as much verse as Timrod, not all valuable, nor even natural and strong.

But in him too there is much real poetry, much true local color. His "Forgotten!" remembers with noble pride the failure of

"Men who strove like gods."

We must recognize the same large sincerity with which Lowell exalts Lincoln, in the lines of Hayne on Stonewall Jackson :—

"O soul! that on our time  
Wrought, in the calm magnificence of power,  
To ends so noble."

Lanier, the most richly gifted man of the group, was perhaps also one of the costly sacrifices of the war, like Timrod, since he contracted at Petersburg in 1863 the disease against which he fought for eighteen years. From childhood he was devoted to music. His two kindred passions were both cruelly starved in the utter poverty that befell the South after the war. The pathetic story of his life cannot be coherently told in brief space.

Sidney  
Lanier,  
1842-1881.

In Baltimore, after long years, he found opportunity for thorough study of Anglo-Saxon and English poetry, which he required as part of his large preparation. His "Science of English Verse," 1880, includes a most technical and ingenious study of rhythm, tone-color of vowels and consonants, and kindred problems. He believed in a closer union of pure music and poetic utterance than has ever been achieved, perhaps closer than is attainable by the artist, or intelligible to other men. The ridicule that befell his "Centennial Cantata," however, was certainly unfair, because the words, though published alone, were a mere libretto, intended to be heard only as

sung to Dudley Buck's music. This opportunity for distinction in 1876 came to Lanier through the generous friendship of Bayard Taylor, and first made him widely known. But he had hardly begun to use in poetry the matured results of his scientific studies, when the struggle to live and breathe at all became hopeless. No life in our annals gives so profound an impression of rare genius never adequately revealed.

There is relatively little, even in Lanier's small volume of verse, which can be of general interest. Perhaps such music as that of "Chattahoochee," compared with Tennyson's brook, will indicate that Lanier, had he lived, might have rivaled Swinburne in the harmonic and rhythmic effects of verse. "The Marshes of Glynn," we are told, can never be forgotten by a reader who knows also the actual sounds and lights of a Southern swamp. "How Love sought for Hell" is probably the clearest utterance of his lofty ethical convictions. He felt that he had, waiting for utterance, the noble truths which can alone justify the most melodious forms. Of that confidence he has perhaps left us less adequate justification in his verses than in prose, which includes some flashing critical analyses of William Morris, Swinburne, Whitman, and others.

It is no wonder that the most intensely and purely poetic voice from the Southland, in our own days, should cry to Lanier :—

John  
Banister  
Tabb, 1845-

"Ere Time's horizon-line was set,  
Somewhere in space our spirits met."

Any soul to whom the ecstasy of lyric passion has ever come might well dream that he had met, or hope

yet to meet, in "wind-swept space," the dauntless, spotless soul of the soldier, musician, poet, and true lover, Sidney Lanier.

A most remarkable change of sectional allegiance is seen in the career of Albert Pike. Born in Boston and educated at Harvard, he early became, through explorations, then through final choice, identified with the Southwest. His proslavery and anti-Yankee feelings are expressed in stirring verse and earnest prose. He not only served against Mexico in 1847, but later led a troop of Indians under the Confederate flag. His early environment is a curious gloss upon his song:—

"For Dixie's land we take our stand,  
And live or die for Dixie!"

In his tenderer and more dreamy moods he is a true poet. Mr. Stedman, who admires him, quotes, in the "Anthology," his "To the Mockingbird." Naturally, such a poem suffers by the comparison with the immortal "Nightingale" of Keats. Yet the Occidental bird's note is no mere echo, but a genuine and truly poetic utterance.

Except the throbbing, yet finished quatrains and sonnets of Father Tabb, which remind us of Landor's best cameos in verse, there is little in our latest poetry to be assigned to the South. The most popular singer to-day is Frank Stanton. A glance into Stedman's "Anthology" will discover sweet utterances of his in at least three tones: national patriotism in "One Country," wedded love in "A Little Way"—and a "Plantation Ditty." Paul Dunbar, the negro poet, was born, long after the war, in Ohio.

Albert Pike,  
1809-1891.

Frank  
Lebby  
Stanton,  
1857-

Paul  
Laurence  
Dunbar,  
1872-

While New England had to wait two centuries before the grim earlier chapters of her story, particularly the relations of the Puritans with the Indians, the Quakers, and their own brethren accused of witchcraft, could receive artistic treatment, the terrible break in the Southern civilization makes a prompter filial action necessary, as to the remoter or the recent past.

Perhaps it was the excellent Yankee school seventy years ago in Powelton, Georgia, that lifted Richard Johnston from the contented ignorance of that plantation life which his childhood shared, and which in later years he has so delightfully recalled. Readers of *St. Nicholas* need no introduction to his Little Ike Templin, while Mr. Billy Downs and his set give delight, and food for serious thought also, to riper students of sociology. Though a professor of *belles lettres* in Maryland State University by 1851, Colonel Johnston really began his literary career as late as Dr. Holmes. He is perhaps the happiest example of those men, already mature in 1861, who not merely outlived, like Hayne, but outgrew, the immediate influence of the war, and fully accepted their own place in a new order. He was the patriarch amid a goodly group. Few, indeed, of our authors have done more valuable work in our own time than this popular Southern "school." Their artistic realism has completely supplanted the artificial and stilted romance best exemplified in Cooke's "Virginia Comedians."

Joel Chandler Harris will be remembered best for his Uncle Remus, who, though a happy invention, is typically real and important. The harmless wit, the roguishness, the deft pathetic touches, the fre-

Richard  
Malcolm  
Johnston,  
1822-1898.

John Esten  
Cooke,  
1830-1886.  
Joel  
Chandler  
Harris,  
1848-

quent gleam of poetic beauty or symbolic meaning, in the tales of Bre'r Rabbit and his friends or foes, are of course largely Mr. Harris's own creation, though the folklore and tradition are genuine at the core, and all the elements blend in the delicious result. All such masterly work has its share in that loyal and effective artistic defense of the old régime which is so happily in progress. Mr. Harris has a much larger career than that of the humorist alone. His work occasionally crosses the field of Mr. Page's books. He has even written a history: "Georgia, from the Invasion of De Soto to Present Times."

While Mr. Harris was and is a Georgian, Mr. Page was born in Virginia. Too young to serve even in the last exhaustive draught of boys and graybeards in defense of the South, he has shown truthfully in his "Little Confederates" how intense was the feeling of the women, and of the children hardly less. The softening effect of time is felt in most of Mr. Page's work. His most sustained novel, however, "Red Rock," is, even in its subtitle, a serious picture of reconstruction. It shows the stanchest attachment to the section of his birth, and the background, at least, is decidedly gray still, rather than blue. Some of Mr. Page's short stories, as "Two Prisoners," show mastery of artistic and pathetic effects quite apart from his original Southern field.

James Lane Allen is a popular member of the same general group, though Kentucky is a border state, which did not as a whole share in great revolt. His most recent work shows an intrusion of theology, of psychological problems generally, which may endanger his artistic career.

Thomas  
Nelson  
Page, 1853.

James Lane  
Allen, 1849-

Ruth  
McEnery  
Stuart,  
1856-

Mrs. Stuart barely shares the personal memories of the war time, and there are no deep scars from it upon her life or work. Indeed, she might at times seem to count among our purely humorous writers, though the pathos almost always comes in before her merry tale is done, and her sense of form and proportion is true and fine. Louisiana and Arkansas are her home fields, and her free Keltic imagination illuminates them both.

George  
Washington  
Cable,  
1844-

Mr. Cable has reproduced in nearly all his genial books the life and dialect of the Louisiana Creoles. This is a subject apart, though not wholly remote, from the general life in the land of cotton and rice. His accuracy has been rather sharply questioned by some Southern critics, but his art certainly makes effective appeal to our alien ears.

Mary  
Noailles  
Murfree  
("Charles  
Egbert  
Craddock"),  
1850-

Much more austere aloof from all men stand the mountaineers of Tennessee. Even aided by Miss Murfree's goodly shelf of books, with their sturdy masculine figures, their somewhat monotonous dialect and background, we do not fully overcome that sense of extreme remoteness, which is, indeed, without doubt, a part of the artist's intention. There is a large creative force, a poetic effect of atmosphere, in these books, which may yet give them a revival of popularity and a permanent value.

Marion J.  
(Evans)  
Wilson,  
1835-

Margaret  
(Junkin)  
Preston,  
1825-1897.

The list of Southern authors is by no means exhausted. Marion Evans was once a most popular story-writer, and "St. Elmo" is still called for. Mrs. Preston, a refined novelist, would have wished to be counted with the section that gave her birth. F. H. Smith's wide wanderings with palette and pen might relegate him to the cosmopolitans, but his

Colonel Carter is as unforgettable as any Southern gentleman of the old school. The latest popular favorite, Miss Johnston, has time before her to write a whole cycle of romances at her present speed. Her English style is formed on excellent models. Her taste for horrors is not so pronounced as Simms's. But her imagination is even more riotous, and has little regard as yet for the humble realities of early Virginian life, or for the limits beyond which even a novel of action may not drag the breathless reader, or "the lady's silken gown." It was a masculine poet—Pindar—to whom a preceptress gave the warning, "Sow by the handful, not from the sack."

Francis  
Hopkinson  
Smith,  
1838–  
Mary  
Johnston,  
1870–

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Edward  
Everett  
Hale, 1822-

THE living patriarchs of New England letters, like Dr. Hale and Colonel Higginson, may perhaps be considered as the slow-passing rear guard of the Emersonian phalanx. Mr. Hale's "Man without a Country" was the most popular short story of our war epoch, in fact, one of the most famous and effective American stories ever written. His activity ever since, as indeed long before, has been primarily that of the preacher and organizer of social reforms. His historical work, though severely criticised for inaccuracy, is always readable, and, like much of his verse and fiction, inspiringly patriotic in tone. His "New England Boyhood" has already an historic, almost an antiquarian, value.

Thomas  
Wentworth  
Higginson,  
1823-

Colonel Higginson's life seems yet longer, for its activity began very early. Near kinsman of the Channings, vitally influenced by Margaret Fuller, whom he has loyally repaid, he was just in time to have his boyish verse wisely declined, as he assures us, by the elder *Dial*. His parsonage in Worcester, Massachusetts, was long a station on the "Underground Railway," i.e. a harboring place for fugitive slaves. He was wounded, and imprisoned, as the leader in an attempt to rescue a recaptured bondsman from the very stronghold of law and government in his own state. He was deep in John

John Brown,  
1800-1859.

Brown's secrets, and risked his life in an unsuccessful second raid, vainly essayed to rescue some of Brown's comrades from their later death on the gallows. When men with negro blood were permitted to enlist in regiments under white officers, for the Civil War, the "young curate from Worcester" came naturally to the front. His "*Army Life in a Black Regiment*" is one of the most instructive and humane chapters in the grim tale of war.

Since then his career has been essentially in literature, though anything but that of a cloistered scholar. He is a lifelong champion of woman suffrage, a fearless advocate of pure politics, of the poor man's rights, of the golden rule. His literary touch, especially as an essayist, is peculiarly graceful, sensitive and light. His tact almost hides his audacity. Radical in nearly all else, he is one of our few effective advocates and exemplars of classical and humanistic culture. While his enjoyment of fighting is as undeniable as Whittier's, his optimism is almost as unfailing as Emerson's. The "*Cheerful Yesterdays*" of such a man are a happy chapter of our literary chronicles, and emphasize the closest relations of letters and life.

In Arlington, a beautiful suburb of Boston, still lives the favorite of our boyhood, J. T. Trowbridge, author of such popular tales as "*Cudjo's Cave*" and "*Coupon Bonds*," written in war time, and of many a good story since. His "*Vagabonds*," and "*Darius Greene*," are only the best known of many poems, original in melody and character.

An old favorite of children, too, especially for his books of travel, was H. E. Scudder, who has also been

John  
Townsend  
Trowbridge,  
1827-

Horace  
Elisha  
Scudder,  
1838-1902

a most devoted and modest editor of our chief New England authors. His life of Lowell is the latest and largest of many similar studies. He was the most useful and industrious of bookmen. His death is one of the latest recorded in these pages, and is deeply felt by many younger writers, whose generous mentor he has been so long.

Charles  
Eliot  
Norton,  
1827-

The accepted living representative of culture and general scholarship in literature is Professor Norton, the surviving friend of all the three Smith professors, Ticknor, Longfellow, and Lowell, translator of Dante, author of "Church Building in the Middle Ages," highly useful as editor of his friends' letters and speeches, the sympathetic father confessor of countless younger authors or scholars. As professor of the history of art, he has taught above all else the inseparable relation between the fine arts and the moral life of community or individual. It is the lesson which our race most needs. A heavy recent loss from the same circle was the death of the well-beloved Professor Child, editor of the British poets, whose unwearied search saved from oblivion many of the English ballads included in his exhaustive and monumental edition.

Francis  
James  
Child,  
1825-1896.

Julia Ward  
Howe, 1819-

Adeline  
Dutton  
Train  
Whitney,  
1824-

Mrs. Howe is the most venerable and the most illustrious of literary women in Boston. Her long career as philanthropist, reformer, and likewise as poet, are worthy of her "Battle Hymn," the supreme utterance of the war.

A venerable survivor, also, is Mrs. Whitney of Milton, another suburb of Boston. Her direct influence with girls is doubtless waning already, like Miss Edgeworth's, Mrs. Sigourney's, or Miss Sedgwick's

before her. She is indeed avowedly rather a moralist than an imaginative writer, and each generation usually produces its own preachers and critics of life, as of literature, neglecting even the best of other days. Yet there is much wit, as well as womanly wisdom, in her goodly row of volumes.

The widow of J. T. Fields, so long the "Mæcenas" among publishers, has made valuable supplements to his intimate "Yesterdays with Authors," and has written the completed life of Mrs. Stowe. She has a modest place also among writers of verse.

James  
Thomas  
Fields,  
1816-1881.  
Annie  
(Adams)  
Fields, 1834-

These men and women are nearly all past seventy, Mrs. Howe even more than eighty. When we seek for their successors we realize how strong is the outward current.

Mr. Aldrich appears already to belong to a former literary generation, and indeed his pen seems to have gathered rust for some years past. The Portsmouth career of the "Bad Boy" is familiar to all young readers. As editor of the *Atlantic* his figure became as familiar to Bostonians as Phillips Brooks's gigantic frame, or the gaunt shape of E. E. Hale. Mr. Aldrich recalls a previous incarnation on the banks of old Nile; and indeed, so far as pure and serious art, with a dash of dreamy idealism still, may drift from the austerer tradition of Puritanism, he has departed. He never preached, in any sense. His workmanship is exquisite, but never painfully so. His lyric verse is tender, yet touched with the light-hearted humor which colors his whole view of life. His best short stories have a large vein of mischief and mystification. His longer novels perhaps lack somewhat the justification of broad view or large ethical purpose, but all

Thomas  
Bailey  
Aldrich,  
1837-

the too little that he writes is enjoyed. His firm, light touch is on whatever he does. It would be far easier to apply the word *indolent* to him than to Lowell. He would first defiantly question our right to work him against his will, then more soberly assure us that nothing *can* be done aright save when the spirit moves. But the spirit is Ariel.

Barrett  
Wendell,  
1855—  
Nathaniel  
Southgate  
Shaler,  
1841—

Frank  
Bolles,  
1856–1894.  
John  
Burroughs,  
1837—  
“Olive  
Thorne”  
Miller,  
1831—  
Bradford  
Torrey,  
1843—  
William  
Ellery  
Channing,  
1818–1901.  
Franklin  
Benjamin  
Sanborn,  
1831—  
Julian  
Hawthorne,  
1846—

An essayist and critic like Professor Wendell seems to stand quite alone, even in Cambridge. Professor Shaler is perhaps as much a man of letters as of science, while his “United States of America” combines the two in useful fashion, connecting geology with the present life of our people. Both Harvard and literature suffered in the premature death of Frank Bolles. Among all the happy disciples of Thoreau, interpreters of outdoor life through the microscope and telescope, like John Burroughs, Mrs. Miller, Bradford Torrey, he, the youngest, had the most unique literary or personal quality, perhaps the most poetic nature. He seems still Chocorua’s quiet tenant-in-common with squirrels and birds.

In Concord the sturdily willful poet, Channing, survived into the twentieth century, and the yet more sturdy old Abolitionist, Frank Sanborn, still gives and takes the heaviest blows with quiet enjoyment. Julian Hawthorne, with much of his father’s gloomy imagination, much less than his father’s artistic control and reticence, has written vivid but often crude romances, with little ethical significance. He is not at home in Puritanic Concord, certainly, hardly in America at all.

There are a number of graceful and thoughtful writers of prose in the Wellesley faculty: Miss

Scudder and Miss Bates, of the English department, are perhaps the most widely known. Miss Bates's volume on American literature is full of just such vivid local color and antiquarian lore as Alice Morse Earle's delightful books. Miss Scudder's "Introduction" is the best-proportioned, most philosophic, and alluring work in brief compass upon English literature known to the present writer.

Vida  
Dutton  
Scudder,  
1861-  
Katharine  
Lee Bates,  
1859-

In Boston itself the most familiar younger figure is probably Judge Grant. His "Opinions and Reflections"—of a social leader in the city of culture—suffer a bit from the inevitable comparison with the breakfast-table talk by an older critic of life. His stories have ranged from popular boys' books to the merciless and even cynical if not despairing realism of his "Unleavened Bread," whose heroine is the severest criticism of American womanhood known to us. In prose and occasional verse Mr. Grant is witty, keen, reflective, instructive.

Robert  
Grant, 1852-

Boyle O'Reilly is still missed, though he remained to the end, like his cousin "Miles," an Irishman, a Bohemian, a cosmopolitan good fellow. His "Yarn of the Amber Whale" he picked up on the New Bedford vessel that saved him from the life of a Fenian convict.

John Boyle  
O'Reilly,  
1844-1890.  
Charles G.  
Halpine,  
1829-1868.

Miss Wilkins has lived in Randolph, not many miles away, while Miss Jewett divides her year between Boston and her home in South Berwick, Maine. Both are widely known for their exact and interesting studies of the humbler phases in New England rural life. Miss Wilkins is usually a somewhat depressing realist. Miss Jewett's landscape has a happier coloring; she is more poetic, even

Mary  
Eleanor  
Wilkins,  
1862-  
Sarah Orne  
Jewett,  
1849-

romantic, in spirit, and her characters have a richer endowment of Yankee humor. Her range is also somewhat wider, and she has even written one careful historical monograph, "The Story of the Normans." Miss Brown is perhaps already to be set in the same group.

Alice  
Brown,  
1857-

Historians, like Schouler, Rhodes, John T. Morse, are mentioned elsewhere. Antiquarians, specialists, men eminent in curious research, are not rare in Boston, and are abundant in Cambridge. President Eliot has not only been the reörganizer of the university, the foremost reformer in American education generally, but has defended his theses with persuasive voice and vigorous pen for thirty years and more. All this, however, is rather scientific scholarship than literature as a fine art. Perhaps the latter no longer has a local habitation anywhere. Certainly the Boston or Cambridge of a half-century ago is a memory only. Pilgrimages are made thither, just as to Concord or even to Plymouth, to visit the homes, the haunts, and the graves of the departed.

Charles  
William  
Eliot, 1834-

Laura  
Elizabeth  
(Howe)  
Richards,  
1850-

Celia  
(Leighton)  
Thaxter,  
1835-1894.  
Harriet  
Prescott  
Spofford,  
1835-

Mrs. Howe's daughter, Mrs. Richards, now living in Gardiner, Maine, has used her inherited gift as a writer of exquisite child stories. "Captain January" is a masterpiece. The poetry of the sea and shore by Mrs. Thaxter will always be associated with the Isle of Shoals. Mrs. Spofford, long an *Atlantic* essayist, author of strong and imaginative romances, still lives in Newburyport, Massachusetts. Her recent volume of poems, "In Titian's Garden," reveals, even by its title, her love of rich and romantic coloring.

Mrs. Ward, an intense religious nature, with an

audacious vividness of imagination, is associated with Andover, but now abides with her husband in Newton, Massachusetts. In temperament she seems a survival of the most strenuous Puritanism, though she adds to it a wide culture and much artistic power. Her "Come Forth," in which Mr. Ward collaborated, makes Lazarus the center of a romantic love story. The danger in such patching of old cloth of gold with new calico is intimated elsewhere in alluding to "Ben Hur." Mrs. Ward's poetry is perhaps the clearest expression of her ardent, confident, half-mystical genius.

Elizabeth  
Stuart  
Phelps  
Ward,  
1844-

In Rhode Island was born H. H. Brownell, whose war lyrics are still favorites. "The Bay Fight" and "The River Fight" are chapters from his own experience. Charles T. Brooks, for nearly forty years a Unitarian preacher in Newport, Rhode Island, was best known for his translations. His version of "Faust" is overshadowed, perhaps unduly, by Bayard Taylor's skillful rendering.

Henry  
Howard  
Brownell,  
1820-1872.

Charles  
Timothy  
Brooks,  
1813-1883.

By right of birth, at least, the little state of Roger Williams may lay claim to a much more famous man. G. W. Curtis received at Brook Farm, and later at Concord, the best part of his boyish education. His "Nile Notes" (1851) and "Howadji in Syria" (1852) were so fresh and vivid in coloring as to draw some amusing criticism on "moral grounds." Returning from his travels, Curtis plunged into the thick of the antislavery agitation; but in the last decade before the war that no longer meant isolation. Something of mob violence he was still in time to suffer. His remarkable powers as a public speaker were in constant demand, and he was one of the last and

George  
William  
Curtis,  
1824-1892.

greatest recruits in the true old guard of "Lyceum lecturers." No voice was so clear and hopeful a trumpet call to our own dreamful youthtime. A place might well be claimed for him, too, among our greatest public orators. In state and national conventions his organlike voice was known, and hearkened unto perforce.

Curtis wrote a few pleasant verses, but made no claim to be a poet. He published several society novels, now nearly forgotten, save the tender personal sentiment and faded local color of "Prue and I." From his Easy Chair in *Harper's Magazine*, for thirty-five years, he preached social and political righteousness, with a genial grace, a sparkle of wit, and a wide-ranging culture, which raise many of these utterances almost to the level of permanent literature.

Mr. Curtis did not, to any such extent as Mr. Bryant, repine at destiny for making him after all rather a journalist than an author. His political services, especially as the editor of *Harper's Weekly* during and after the war, can hardly be overestimated. Indeed, this life is probably the best example we could cite, for a happy and fruitful effect from that irresistible maelstrom current toward Manhattan already often mentioned. The leading advocate of reform in our civil service, a fearless idealist in politics, he was often a target of vulgar ridicule and of fierce criticism. But he is now generally accepted as the all but faultless type of the scholarly, public-spirited, independent author-citizen.

Arthur Hardy, a Dartmouth professor of mathematics, excited high hopes long ago by his beautiful

“Passe Rose,” a swift-moving romance of Charlemagne’s time. Recently he has published a small volume of intimately personal verse. As minister to Persia, and to Greece, he has now been long absent, and all but silent.

The best-known man of letters in New Haven, Mr. Mitchell, has reached his eightieth year. He is still best known for his youthful “Dream Life” and “Reveries of a Bachelor.” His long and cheerful career in literature is pleasantly crowned by his reminiscences of “American Lands and Letters.”

Donald  
Grant  
Mitchell,  
1822-

By his great work on Chaucer, and his excellent life of Cooper, Professor Lounsbury has won a very high position among scholarly essayists. President Hadley, Professor Perrin, and other Yale men, are able writers and speakers. Yale, however, has never had a chair at all answering to the Smith professorship at Harvard. The largest name among her recent dead, William D. Whitney, belongs to scholarship rather than to literature.

Thomas  
Raynesford  
Lounsbury,  
1838-

The heaviest loss suffered by Hartford since the departure of Mrs. Stowe is the death of Mr. Warner. In him we find still the serious foundation of the Puritan nature; but of asceticism, bigotry, intolerance, there is no trace. The pure humor, indicative of a serene yet sensitive nature plays lightly over every page he wrote.

Charles  
Dudley  
Warner,  
1829-1900.

The story of his happy childhood in the country he has told us in “Being a Boy.” He had a varied early manhood, as civil engineer on the Western frontier, practicing law in Chicago, then as editor in Hartford. He made his entry into literature late, and, as it were, accidentally, being persuaded by popu-

lar applause to make a book out of sketches which he had at first modestly contributed to his paper, the *Courant*. The control of the newspaper he always retained, and was also an editor of *Harper's Magazine*, 1884-1898. He was all his life an eager but critical reader, a frequent traveler, a keen student of men and manners.

Mr. Warner put an extremely modest estimate upon his own creative work, and his permanent place in our literature may not be large. His personal influence on all who knew him was truly inspiring. He was the most conscientious of workers. When already an old man, with many divergent interests, he assumed the editorship of the ambitious "Library of the World's Best Literature," in thirty octavo volumes. During the rapid completion of this task he discussed carefully the assignment of every name. As the original essays arrived, he gave to each at least one uninterrupted critical reading. Every error or fault of style was noted, and revision insisted upon. To his staff of devoted assistants no large editorial responsibility was ever abandoned.

"Warner's  
Library,"  
1896-1898.

Mr. Warner was by no means a man of the boldest creative imagination. He was not a poet at all. The form of the novel he deliberately adopted, quite late in his career, expressly to criticise most effectively certain dangerous phases of metropolitan life. There is something of the clever amateur in his rather transparent plots, as in Dr. Holmes's; but his shrewd observation, and his genial philosophy of life, make his three stories valuable, chiefly as realistic studies by a keen yet kindly critic.

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E. E. Hale's fifty books have many publishers. "Man without a Country," Little, Caldwell, Estes. Colonel Higginson's works, Houghton. Frank Bolles's works, Houghton. "Unleavened Bread," by Robert Grant, Scribner. Aldrich's works, Houghton. "Come Forth," by Mr. and Mrs. Ward, Houghton. Curtis's works, Harper. "Passe Rose," by A. S. Hardy, Houghton. Warner's essays by Houghton, novels by Harper. See in general, Vedder's "American Writers."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE WEST

THE West is after all but the swift-grown child of the East. There is no sharp line between, such as slavery drew about the South. There were but two notable pauses or eddies of the steady occidental stream: in the Ohio Valley, and at the Pacific coast itself. From either the back current is still strong, as we have remarked: and especially so for the literary artist, as we shall note repeatedly.

Early waifs in this Eastward tide were, for instance, Alice Cary and her less fluent, more ardent, gifted sister, Phoebe. Both came from Ohio to New York in 1852. Their city home became the center of a social and literary circle as pure and earnest as their verse. Much of the elder sister's work, in particular, was crude fiction and hasty hack work, already forgotten. Their utterance, more successfully at least than their outward career, threw its gentle force against the drift cityward. Children of the middle West they were still to the last. The critics usually deny them greatness; but many men and women who dare praise aloud only "the bards sublime," know by heart, and murmur in lonely hours, "An Order for a Picture," and especially "Nearer Home." One brief personal utterance of Sappho, aglow with a flame far less pure, has come to us across the billowy centuries that have closed over

Alice Cary,  
1820-1871.  
Phoebe  
Cary,  
1824-1871.

almost all the epics and tragedies, the stately galleons of antiquity.

A much later acquisition of New York from Ohio is Miss Thomas, whose lyric verse, laden with the rich vocabulary of Elizabethan English, full of exquisite gleams from outdoor life, and of deep spiritual insight through suffering, is perhaps the most elaborately artistic utterance we now have. "The Inverted Torch," in particular, contains passages not wholly unworthy of "Lycidas," "In Memoriam," or any great threnody of our language.

The purely literary career that is most completely typical of our last four decades is doubtless Mr. Howells's. Born in an Ohio village, bred with scant formal education, but among abundant English books and intelligent kin, he was typesetter, reporter, editor at twenty-two, published a book of verse in 1860, wrote a campaign life of Lincoln, and received the consulship at Venice as his reward.

His four years in Italy were well employed. His "Modern Italian Poets" is full of excellent criticism and translation; but it is amusing to see how frankly the young Ohioan alludes to a large element in these poets which he does not understand. It is, in fact, that unbroken relation to the whole historic past, above all to classical antiquity, which is closest in Italy, and is so remote from the consciousness of our own Western type of man.

Howells's early leap to the chief editorship of the *Atlantic*, in 1872, was a notable and successful invasion of local exclusiveness. But ten years later he retired, soon came to New York, and has since written a very long shelf of novels. Howells's enthusi-

Edith  
Matilda  
Thomas,  
1854-

William  
Dean  
Howells,  
1837-

asm, idealism, romanticism, never prominent, long ago quite vanished. In fact his literary creed has now hardly room for anything but the faithful transcription of life, which seems also to mean for him essentially the daily doings and sayings of average men. Perhaps it is unfair to add the popular judgment that he usually creates women shallow and inane below the average of any American community: but at least we must dissent heartily from his conviction, that our women lack the sense of humor. Furthermore, even prosaic truth is uttered more and more in the unmistakable tone, if not form, of the preacher. He has almost come at last, like Tolstoi, to a semi-hostile contempt for all merely beautiful art, or for any effort not austerely altruistic and philanthropic.

Mr. Howells has, perhaps, deliberately undertaken, like Balzac, to include in a cycle of realistic scenes all the salient types of the social world as he has seen it. His books may therefore be much more valuable and interesting to a future historian than to us, who think we know, all too well, our everyday selves.

The crop of Hoosier poets has been larger than in the eastward neighbor-state, and the local quality in their work has been more pervasive and essential. John Hay, indeed, who leaped into public notice with the rather irreverent poetry of "Little Breeches" and "Jim Bludso," is almost lost from sight, for the new generation, in the courtly diplomatist and statesman, the secretary and biographer of Lincoln, who came from the London embassy to take the highest position in Mr. McKinley's cabinet.

But J. J. Piatt, though many years in Washington and twelve years consul at Cork, has never ceased to be a poet of the middle West. His first book of rhymes was a joint venture with Howells in 1860. Many verses by his gifted wife, who is of Kentucky birth, have also appeared in his volumes year by year. After sharing with his brother Will the falling fortunes of the South, Maurice Thompson returned to the state of his birth. Much later, in 1890, he came to the local staff of the *New York Independent*. Indeed, Thompson was the most versatile and happy of men, at home in the East, West, and South, an authority on classicism or literary criticism generally, geology, archery, fishing, woodcraft, on life out of doors or in. Poetry, romance, and scholarship are no less happily united in such tales as "Alice of Old Vincennes."

John James  
Piatt, 1835-

Sarah  
Morgan  
(Bryan)  
Piatt, 1836-  
(James)  
Maurice  
Thompson,  
1844-1901.

"Lew" Wallace, a gallant Union general, is most widely known for his "Ben Hur," an extremely popular romance, as audacious in its subject, and as reverent in its intention, as Mrs. Ward's "Come Forth." If a creation of art is to produce a strong, simple effect, it cannot safely piece out the most familiar and sacred incidents with modern and profane invented detail. Indeed, no such work can fail to shock or to bewilder many religious minds. Yet others feel that they draw from it clearer comprehension and more devout belief.

Lewis  
Wallace,  
1827-

Altogether native to Hoosier soil are the subjects, the favorite dialect, and the method generally, of Mr. Riley. He is a real poet, appealing with power to our deepest elemental feelings. We trust the main stream of his verse will run more and more

James  
Whitcomb  
Riley, 1852-

from the wells of English undefiled. "Ike Walton's Prayer" is at least equal to a similar masterpiece of Herrick, "Low is my Porch."

Edward  
Eggles-ton,  
1837-

Dr. Eggleston was born in Indiana, of Virginian stock. His Hoosier schoolboy and schoolmaster, as well as the circuit rider, are drawn essentially from his own life. But the young pioneer had become, before he was forty, an editor at Evanston, Illinois, then at Chicago, later still reached the headship of the *New York Independent*, and was a liberal preacher in Brooklyn. Having left the pulpit over twenty years ago, Dr. Eggleston spends at least half his year in fruitful retirement at Owl's Nest, his cottage by Lake George. A successful writer of boys' books, of novels for grown-ups, and of religious works, Dr. Eggleston has long devoted his best energies to American history. His "Beginnings of a Nation" is a first installment, upon a large scale, and wrought with unstinted devotion. His collection of books, old pictures, manuscripts, and reliques of every kind for his great task is said to be unrivaled. There are, indeed, few lives that seem more wisely planned, more happily rounding to harvest time. May his days be long, and continuously useful.

It is probable that Chicago will hereafter be, in letters as in so much else, the chief bulwark against the centralizing force of New York, perhaps some day her real rival. The beginnings are relatively small, indeed. Meantime, in the columns of a younger *Dial* a wide circle of respected critics, secured from certain very human temptations by their appended signatures, assess contemporary literature with a

frankness, fairness, and courtesy not elsewhere combined.

It is a curious accident that Eugene Field, the most brilliant author yet associated with Chicago, was, in the course of his erratic early life, actually a schoolboy in Amherst, Massachusetts, and a student at Williams College. Eccentric, prodigal, uneven in quality to the last degree, the work of Field, in prose and verse, bears the unmistakable stamp of his unique and powerful genius. Especially, whether in dialect, mock archaic, or straightforward English, Field utters the very heart's secrets of boyhood as not even Riley or Louis Stevenson can do. "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod" became long ago a kindergarten classic. His echoes of Horace are not mere irreverent travesties, but seize the very essence of the thought, and render it in the most startlingly up-to-date English, spiced both with current slang and with Field's own invented idioms. He was really a learned man in many lines rarely, if ever, united before. He was not a cynic, though he never lost the opportunity for mockery, banter, and jest. Mr. Field had the mobile face, the rich, sympathetic voice, of a great actor, and as a reader of his own verse was unapproachable. His early death is as irreparable to lovers of our literature as to those who knew and loved him best in the flesh. Such men as Field, Clemens, Riley, are already quite independent of the Puritan tradition.

The most promising and versatile romancer of Chicago is Mr. Fuller. His "Chevalier of Pensieri Vani" excited the enthusiasm of Mr. Lowell and Professor Norton, and showed mastery of a style as

Eugene  
Field,  
1850-1895.

Henry  
Blake  
Fuller, 1857-

delicate, playful, and consciously artistic as Stevenson's "Prince Otto." After one other such international venture Mr. Fuller came back in "The Cliff-dwellers" to the tall blocks of his Western metropolis, and to comparative realism.

One of the junior instructors in Chicago University, William Moody, though among the youngest of our poets, seems, more than any other who is now active, likely to enforce that direct and fearless appeal to the popular conscience with which Whittier and Lowell once made us familiar. Such verses as those "On a Soldier Fallen in the Philippines" set the author in frankest opposition to the overwhelming popular feeling of the hour; but we have not ceased to share Hosea Biglow's liking for the man "thet ain't afeard!" Mr. Moody is, however, a true dreamer of the dream, and will not give up to preaching the powers which should be consecrated above all to creative and beautiful art.

William  
Vaughan  
Moody,  
1869-

William  
Carleton,  
1845-

"Will" Carleton, born in Michigan, is the chronicler of the rude frontier social life, preacher of the simplest and most obvious moralities, in verse slightly touched with dialect and still more rarely with poetic art. Many years spent in greater New York have left him unchanged. His "Farm Ballads," "Farm Legends," "Rhymes of our Planet," etc., have passed already for the most part to the same forgetfulness as Holland's more melodious verses and E. P. Roe's novels. Yet few men or women past forty can read "Betsy and I are Out," and the self-evident sequel, aloud, with unbroken voice. Carleton's verse has touched a million simple hearts,

and injured none. Poe's weirdest harmonies—but why draw contrasts?

The short stories of "Octave Thanet" depict, better than any others, perhaps, the gradual fusing of alien elements in our new race, the growth in the second generation of a self-respecting Americanism. She knows best the towns and villages of Iowa and the neighboring states. The fierce and all but pessimistic realism of Hamlin Garland has its truthful side, and even its artistic power, also; but we must trust that the future will justify rather the more hopeful pictures of Miss French.

Mrs. Catherwood, a skillful writer of romances, has shared in the revival of the historical novel, laying her scenes on ground made familiar by Parkman. Her Indian battles are almost as graphic and swift-moving as Cooper's. Mrs. Foote, both as novelist and artist, shows her familiarity with the grand mountain scenery of the Southwest, and with the social or economic problems that face the pioneer settlers.

Over thirty years ago Bret Harte's "Luck of Roaring Camp," and other sketches of California miners, gamblers, stage robbers, of the motley, lawless life generally in the gulches and gold fields, were welcomed with general delight, very like the later reception of Kipling's first stories. While his years have more than doubled, Mr. Harte, through one decade spent in the Eastern states and more than one in England, has worked the same vein. Readers he must still find, in other lands at least; but his very name is now hardly familiar to our boys' ears. His verse, serious or comic, is still less remem-

Alice  
French,  
1850-

Hamlin  
Garland,  
1860-

Mary  
(Hartwell)  
Catherwood  
1847-

Mary  
(Hallock)  
Foote, 1847

(Francis)  
Bret Harte,  
1839-1902.

bered to-day, and yet "Ah Sin" is probably the last example of a poem that set our whole people laughing. It perceptibly affected public opinion on a burning question, that of the Chinese Exclusion Bill. There is no dangerous immorality in Mr. Harte's stories. But they pall upon us at last, because, after the novelty wears off, their melodramatic unreality forces itself even upon the most boyish mind.

Cincinnatus  
Hiner  
Miller, 1841-

It was in London that another poet of California, "Joaquin" Miller, became famous by the publication of his "Songs of the Sierras." "The American Byron" his English adorers called him, and the parallel has more excuse than many such. He is yet living in California, has wandered to the Klondike, and is still writing books of verse. He is, despite grievous errors as man and author, a real poet, perhaps the boldest, freest voice of the far West. In a severely winnowed yet copious selection he will live as one of our most original singers. Spiritual message he has none.

Edward  
Rowland  
Sill,  
1841-1887.

Though Sill spent his last years in the University of California, his exquisite lyric gift was in no perceptible degree there acquired. His contrasted poetic descriptions of the Medicean and the Melian Venus might have been written by some sculptor-poet like Story, with a sturdy Puritanic morality underlying his worship of beauty. His "Fool's Prayer" and "Opportunity" are classical in their exact versification, a bit mediæval in color, but, after all, universal, human, masterful. We would gladly know more of this quiet hidden life that has left such pure and sincere lyric expression of itself.

It was by the Golden Gate, too, that rest came to the fiery heart of Helen Hunt. Born, like that shy secluded, yet ardent child of nature and of genius, Emily Dickinson, in the little college town of Amherst, Massachusetts, near the home of the sweet-voiced Goodale sisters, she naturally came under Emerson's influence. His mystical double meanings, overburdened phrase, and audacious breaks in sequence, may all be paralleled in her verse. But it was utter domestic bereavement that first made her a poet, and brought through her comfort to many hearts that ache. Her glimpses of nature remind us of Thoreau's verse and poetic prose.

Inflamed by sympathetic study of the Mission Indians on the west coast, she retold the tale of their wrongs in her "Ramona." This romance has often been likened to Mrs. Stowe's master stroke. In historic importance there is no comparison, but in its glowing, scorching force, and the wild imaginative beauty of descriptive passages, the later book is perhaps superior. The pitiful but essential difference is, that the Indian vanishes before us, we apparently escape the penalty due for the sins of our pioneers, and "Ramona" itself is but an elegy, like "Evangeline" and "Hiawatha," over a broken people. Not so the sturdier black brother; with him, as Whittier reminded us so early,

"Close as sin and suffering joined,  
We march to Fate abreast."

Mrs. Jackson imitated Mrs. Stowe also in publishing the documentary proofs of her case, under the caustic title, "A Century of Dishonor."

Helen	
Maria	
(Hunt)	
(Fisk)	
Jackson,	
1831-1885.	
Emily	
Dickinson,	
1830-1886.	
Elaine	
(Goodale)	
Eastman,	
1863-	
Dora Read	
Goodale,	
1866-	

"Ramona,"  
1884.

Much else this brilliant woman wrought, always with the touch of the artist,—and with the impatience of them that follow the gleam. In verses like “Spinning” she teaches herself in vain the lesson of resignation. The truer note for her is always the restlessness uttered in the “Wandersongs.”

Through California, too, passed in early youth Kate Douglas Wiggin, leaving a flash of sunlit color, mocking laughter, smiles, tears, and murmur of benedictions behind her. However, this favorite bird of passage not only had her first home nest in staid Pennsylvania, but soon flitted eastward again. It is not necessary to follow Jack London to the Klondike, to the blinding snow fields and ice floes of the Arctic, in further quest of local color. The Philippines are not yet a literary annex. Rather we may yield to the reflux current, and return toward the heart of the East.

Kate  
Douglas  
(Smith)  
(Wiggin)  
Riggs, 1857-

Jack  
London,  
1876-

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Howells's novels by Houghton and Harper. Eggleston's “Beginners of a Nation,” Appleton. Eugene Field's works, Scribner. Fuller's “Chevalier of Pensieri Vani,” Century; “Cliff-dwellers,” Harper. Poems of William V. Moody, Houghton. “Octave Thanet” (Miss French), Houghton, Harper, Scribner, McClurg. Bret Harte's works, Houghton. Sill's poems and prose, Houghton. Helen Hunt, poems, “Ramona,” Little.

## CHAPTER V

### THE MIDDLE EAST

THE impetus given by Franklin to the quiet town of Penn spent itself rather early in the race with other cities. Political power passed southward to the newly created capital. Commerce, population, and finally letters have streamed to Manhattan.

The venerable figure of Dr. Mitchell, the friend of Dr. Holmes, himself also the wise and learned physician, philosopher, romancer, poet, is one of the most satisfying in our present horizon. His local attachment is stanch, too, and "Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker," perhaps the best of all our historical romances, successfully revives the half-forgotten glories of Philadelphia as the center of the patriotic struggle for independence. But there is certainly little trace of a local school. Miss Repplier's thorough bookish culture is half French, half British, while the feathered wit of her swift-ranging criticism is perhaps wholly Gallic. Horace Howard Furness, the Shakespearean scholar, Professor John Bach McMaster, the historian of America, and even the unwearied veteran, Henry C. Lea, belong rather to scholarship than to *belles lettres*.

Though Mrs. Deland has been twenty years a Bostonian, the restful coloring of "Tommy Dove" and "Old Chester" tempts us to count her with the

Silas Weir  
Mitchell,  
1829-

Agnes  
Repplier,  
1859-

Margaret  
Wade  
(Campbell)  
Deland,  
1857-

Quakers of Penn's lands still. Into the larger effort entitled "John Ward, Preacher," there entered the strain of intense theological struggle, very much as in Mrs. Humphry Ward's books. Any such motive is a danger to a work of art; yet the high ethical purpose is to be eagerly welcomed back into our fiction, which has too largely become the mere spicy diversion of languid hours. George Eliot showed us that artistic form could mold even such grave material into works of permanent value.

This artist's one migration was most natural; but two or three sons of Pennsylvania have wandered widely indeed. Crèvecoeur, to be sure, was neither native born, nor a willing exile. But Leland has neither excuse. The merry lilt of "Hans Breitmann" was in true Pennsylvanian dialect, surely. It gave much pleasure to the last great English laureate, himself a poet in three or four dialects. But since then Hans has hobnobbed with Spanish brigands, Italian witches, Greek archaeologists, and especially with Borrow's old comrades, the gypsies, until he has quite forgotten the sea path homeward. His republic of congenial spirits would have no Anglo-Saxon dominance, like Kipling's, but a far more motley citizenship than even Crawford's wide artistic sympathy includes. As every homeward-floating report that we catch declares, this is a life as happy as it is long. Lost languages, even, are among the treasure-trove of this inspired excavator and explorer. The secret of human freemasonry is his chief discovery. Hans is in luck still!

A year later only, Bayard Taylor was born to honest poverty at Kennett Square, in Chester County,

Charles  
Godfrey  
Leland,  
1824-

Pennsylvania. Largely self-educated by omnivorous reading, Taylor at nineteen found in New York a market vainly to be sought there now. Horace Greeley engaged beforehand a series of traveler's letters. The two years' journeyings described in "Views Afoot" cost, thanks to abstemious habits and privations gladly faced, only five hundred dollars, all earned by the letters to the *Tribune* and by an occasional poem in the forgotten magazines of pre-*Atlantic* days. Taylor's popularity as a lecturer in following years was like that of John L. Stoddard and his stereopticon in our time. His copyrights bought him a share in the *Tribune*, for which journal he became the first great world-circling reporter, sent to the millennial celebration of Iceland, to the gold fields of '49, even to the heart of Africa.

Yet he never really lost the home feeling. His beautiful Cedarhurst overlooks many goodly acres that had once been owned, two centuries earlier, by his first American ancestor. "The Story of Kennett" and other romances are loyal to his own soil.

Later his German wife aided Mr. Taylor to a full entrance into the literature of the Vaterland. His "Faust," in the meters and rhymes of the original, is doubtless the most perfect piece of uncreative work a poet ever set himself to do.

The craving for the poet's crown made Bayard Taylor unsatisfied with all else. Bits of his lyric are living yet, and especially his "Poems of the Orient" breathe full East. His "Centennial Ode" of 1876 was worthy of the distinction. But his most ambitious attempts—"Lars," "Deukalion," "Masque of the Gods"—were quite too remote even for his partial

(James)  
Bayard  
Taylor,  
1825-1878.

"Views  
Afoot,"  
1846.

"Story of  
Kennett,"  
1866.

"Faust,"  
1871.

"Masque of  
the Gods,"  
1872.

"Lars,"  
1873.

"Prince Deukalion," 1878.

readers. This failure to reach a really national position wounded his noble pride. Perhaps he had been absent too long. Perhaps his time would have come, later yet. Perhaps he gave fully what he was fitted to give. He died suddenly, and, as it seemed, untimely, very soon after reaching Berlin as American minister. Longfellow wrote for him a dirge beginning:—

"Dead he lay among his books,  
The peace of God in all his looks."

"Echo Club," 1878.

A singularly detached piece of Taylor's work is the "Echo Club," the cleverest series of harmless parodies yet made in America.

Thomas Buchanan Read, 1822-1872.

The fuller allegiance of Mr. Read to the painter's art explains his long Italian exile, like Story's. The familiar experience of twofold homesickness is indicated in his "Drifting," while his "Sheridan's Ride" is one of the best war lyrics, and his hero gallops almost as resonantly as the trio in Browning's "Ghent to Aix."

Authors are usually busy, struggling folk. Their actual work is best done in solitude. They never need congregate, as lawyers must, nor become public characters, like preachers. Not all of them find in their own fellow-craftsmen their best stimulus or comradeship. They dislike to be netted in "schools," like fish. Even in a smaller town, three prominent writers, like Mrs. Stowe, Mr. Warner, and Mark Twain in Hartford, need not influence each other. In the world-city on and about Manhattan people almost as famous as that trio may live for decades, and never grow aware one of another. They are

simply men and women, absorbed in observing, studying, and recording.

Nevertheless, the early friendship of Boker, the rich Philadelphia banker's son and graduate of Princeton, Bayard Taylor, coming from his country school, and Stoddard from his iron foundry, a friendship later shared by Stedman and Aldrich, is as real a link in our story as Simms's Charleston coterie, or that elder Mutual Admiration Society at the Boston Saturday Club, where Holmes talked, while Emerson and Hawthorne, Agassiz and Lowell, listened. Just such a group could only meet in New York, where Puritanic Bryant, and even the jovial Southron, Gilmore Simms, could be equally at home.

Boker's dramas were written early, and in the eager hope of a real theatrical career. The subjects did not hit the rather crudely patriotic taste at home, but were drawn from Spain as in Longfellow's case, from Italy, and England. In the latter land, too, but not at home, his Spanish drama, "Calaynos," was promptly staged, and had a moderate success. It was many years after, too late to revive Mr. Boker's early enthusiasm, when Lawrence Barrett made "Francesca da Rimini" well known to American audiences. Perhaps our lack of a vigorous dramatic literature is not mainly chargeable to our poets. Certainly, even when merely read carefully, Boker's "Francesca" seems a remarkably strong play. The versification, and the character drawing, though both lack the dreamy mysterious charm of Stephen Phillips's recent "Francesca," are strong, masculine, and clear. Indeed, Boker's plays are probably the best yet produced among us.

George  
Henry  
Boker,  
1823-1890.  
Richard  
Henry  
Stoddard,  
1825-

"Calaynos,"  
1848.  
"Anne  
Boleyn,"  
1850.

"Collected  
Plays,"  
1856.

In general, Boker has hardly come to his due as an author. Some of his war lyrics have always been favorites, notably the "Charge of the Black Regiment," and "Dirge for a Soldier." After his diplomatic career ended, he spent his last years in the refined and exclusive social life of his birthplace.

Richard H. Stoddard, though the son of a Yankee sea captain, seems to belong wholly to the metropolis, where he has lived from his tenth year. He is one of our sturdiest men of letters, yet without a trace of the savagery that amused him in Whitman. Indeed, his standing as a refined and artistic poet is unquestioned, though his own preference for his Oriental vein is not shared by his warmest admirers. Perhaps, rather, Abraham Lincoln is his fittest subject, despite the deadly rivalry of Lowell's "Commemoration Ode." Mr. Stoddard and his friends feel that the lifelong fight against the wolf on the doorstone, the chained servitude to hack work of every kind, has prevented the larger artistic growth he could have attained. But even his frank, kindly reviews of current works, for thirty years, in daily newspapers, have been a real if often thankless service to his craft. More permanent are his careful studies of the older English poets. Best of all is his brave, free, generous life. Mrs. Stoddard is his comrade in all tasks, has herself an independent and vigorous though not a large share in American lyric, and has written three original and powerful novels.

It is to such folk, the last who would seek or perhaps even accept it as a favor, that care-free leisure for purely artistic work should come as a right, a professional distinction fairly won in noble competition.

Elizabeth  
Drew  
(Barstow)  
Stoddard,  
1823-

We are beginning to endow plodding research. The dreamer of dreams is more needed, and as a rule more needy. Stephen Phillips, in his youthful vigor, is a pensioner of the crown. Shall our poets find no Carnegie?

The life of our chief literary historian and sympathetic critic has resembled that of his senior and friend, Stoddard, though both his distractions and his literary activities appear to have moved through larger curves to more ambitious results. A career in Wall Street would seem a far more dangerous and irrevocable desertion of the Muses than any drudgery of Newspaper Row. Yet when the poet, the other day, formally retired from business life, even one of his brother financiers was inspired to utter the love of them all, in witty and tender verse.

Edmund  
Clarence  
Stedman,  
1833-

Certainly Stedman's popularity among the brethren of the swan-quill is fairly earned. No man, surely, has received with patient courtesy so many eager aspirants. His correspondence is itself a fine art, in its tact and scrupulous care. His quartette of comprehensive works, the Victorian and American Anthologies, the critical estimates of recent English poetry and of all our American verse, would alone be the monument of a busy life.

The young architect of airy rhyme, seeking esoteric suggestion and guidance, will naturally find more in Stedman's interpretative prose than the lay reader can hope to do. As a critic he is extremely gentle. A somewhat severer winnowing of the best in each man's work from the commonplace, a franker tone, when need be, of reproof or even condemnation, many of us miss. Thus he grants Whitman

the distinction of a full chapter in the "Poets of America," intimates, of course, his own wide divergence from the noisome swamp of "Priapism," yet by no means gives to "Whitmania" the *coup de grace* which Colonel Higginson, no less tactful and courteous, has delivered, with more deadly force than is his wont, in a brief section of his "Contemporaries."

Stedman's verse is by some considered to give him the first place among our living poets. Perhaps so. Though not "an empty day," our own is at best but a lyrical intermezzo, beginning when Lowell grew silent, if not longer ago. Mr. Stedman paid his prompt tribute of fearless admiration to Ossawatomie Brown in 1859, and later wrote war lyrics, like "Kearney at Seven Pines." Perhaps his "Cavalry Song" is best known, though lovers and country boys have thanked him for "The Doorstep," until he begs beforehand that his "least considered trifle" shall be praised no more.

This chain of friendship still adds newer links. Stedman collaborated with Stoddard long ago, and in 1895 produced with Professor Woodberry the monumental edition of Poe's works. To Longfellow, the lover of the beautiful, who sought and found little else save beauty, succeeded fitly in the Smith chair, and in the larger seat of public criticism, Mr. Lowell, with his franker dislikes, his severer assessment of evil as of good. So Mr. Woodberry, who has seemed most likely to rival the scope of Stedman's critical work, is far less the "Friend of all the World," whether in personal comradeship or literary toleration. As a poet Mr. Woodberry clings to the North Shore of the Bay State. Indeed, he may

George  
Edward  
Woodberry,  
1855-

resent any enrollment in Manhattan at all. As professor of comparative literature, and as judged from some recent utterances, Mr. Woodberry seems likely to welcome that Hellenic revival which is perhaps the crying need of our literary and general artistic life, and which the rise of athletics may seem to bring already one step nearer.

One Columbia colleague, Brander Matthews, is possibly more widely known than Woodberry, by his criticism of drama, of words and dialect, of manners and life, by his own work as playwright, and of late by realistic sketches of the many-tinted cosmopolitan life in the great seaport. Other New Yorkers there are that demand a page, at least, where a line is hardly to be spared. Among the dead we must name Winthrop, first of our young athletes, who galloped across the prairies in real life as in his romance of "John Brent," and was a costly early loss in the Civil War : H. C. Bunner, easily the first American in the school of Austin Dobson, best-beloved of jesters and parodists : Richard Hovey, the elegiac mourner for T. W. Parsons, himself just dead in his early prime, whose Arthurian verse rang fearless challenge on the laureate's lofty shield ; and, most picturesque and pathetic among all the city's memories, the great-hearted, childlike editor, Horace Greeley. If his own volume of recollections hardly opens the gate of letters to Farmer Greeley, he must still be mentioned, like James T. Fields in the East, as the generous if gruff helper of every struggling scribbler, from the days of the Cary sisters, Margaret Fuller, or Bayard Taylor, to the end. Among the living, typical rather than preëminent figures, are

James  
Brander  
Matthews,  
1852-

Theodore  
Winthrop,  
1828-1861.

Henry  
Cuyler  
Bunner,  
1855-1896.  
Richard  
Hovey,  
1864-1900.

Horace  
Greeley,  
1811-1872.

Richard  
Watson  
Gilder, 1844-  
Hamilton  
Wright  
Mabie, 1845-

Henry  
Jackson  
Van Dyke,  
1852-

Francis  
Richard  
Stockton,  
1834-1902.

Samuel  
Langhorne  
Clemens,  
1835-

R. W. Gilder, poet, scientific student of poverty and charity, the successful editor of the *Century Magazine*, and H. W. Mabie, genial dispenser with voice and pen of good advice as to our reading and culture. We must trust that he himself finds leisure to peruse Dante and Homer afresh each year in their own speech. His third favorite, Shakespeare, he certainly knows aright. Dr. Van Dyke, though of Dutch ancestry and Scotch creed, is a valued champion of the fullest freedom in thought and utterance, of the happiest outdoor life. Some of the largest figures in the intellectual life of the metropolis, like Curtis and Howells, we have already essayed to sketch.

Not far away in New Jersey is, or was, the home of Frank Stockton, the most elaborately and solemnly absurd of all our humorists. Everything his characters perpetrate is copiously justified, even urged plausibly upon us as obviously the only thing to do ; and while we are vaguely aware that in our own world these people would all be labeled idiots, under his kindlier sky they invariably come to fortune, fame, and happy wedlock. His sea tales strike a more novel vein than Cooper's. In one child's story, "Old Pipes and the Hamadryad," he tosses us, with a gentle grin, an exquisite, genuine mock-Hellenic myth. So it is possible our mirth is bought, in the case of Stockton, at the price of a poet's birthright. But there is one American humorist who towers far above Stockton, toward the height of Rabelais.

The judgment of other peoples, so eagerly accepted in all literary questions by our grandfathers, undoubtedly regards "Mark Twain" as the chief figure among our living authors. It is not easy to

suggest a rival. He is not a poet : but except Mr. Kipling, who is much else, the writers of verse exert little force in the world to-day. Despite some effort of his to escape the name, he is classed as a humorist; but the countrymen of Poor Richard, of Diedrich Knickerbocker, of Hosea Biglow, not to mention professional buffoons like "Artemus Ward" and "Josh Billings," can hardly repudiate such a representative. He is not typical, we may say, he is unique ; but when did originality prove a handicap for fame ? His works may defy classification under the accepted rubries ; so did "Don Quixote," "Hudibras," "Sartor Resartus." He is unsentimental, iconoclastic, irreverent ; but so is his age. Mr. Kipling in his notes on America has a vivid account of his interview with Twain ; and we suspect he has also more or less consciously sketched him, in a memorable poem, as the typical American. "Unkempt" if not "disreputable" Mark might appear ; and "imperturbable" he certainly is.

Bret Harte, in letters, is still a Californian only, and twenty years' exile in London would surely leave Whitcomb Riley, like Piatt, a Hoosier no less. Each belongs to his section. Few know, and no one cares, where "Mark Twain," the American, was born. For the resources of his strength he is as little indebted to any one state or region as is the Father of Waters himself, who gave the boy Missourian his rude apprenticeship as pilot, and his world-famous pen name : for it is simply the Mississippi boatman's call, when the sounding line indicates just two fathoms.

Doubtless the intrusive Yankee at King Arthur's Court horrified Lord Tennyson and his people. As

incongruous he surely is, though by no manner of means so ignoble, as Falstaff's followers in the heroic King Harry's valiant host, or Thersites in the circle of Homeric chiefs. But to set forth that incongruity Mr. Clemens had to see, and depict with absolute vividness, both the oldest and the newest forms of modern life. His boys' story, "The Prince and the Pauper," is as finished a labor of love in its details as "Henry Esmond." His "Joan of Arc" maintains its place against unnumbered rivals. Upon the familiar home ground, the tale grotesquely called "Pudd'nhead Wilson" has a grim tragic power. The homely Western life out of which such giants as Lincoln and Edison are springing has never been so vividly set before us as in some of Twain's autobiographical writings.

Steadfast pluck and unpretentious honesty, or something still more like heroism, he has shown in recent years, quite as much as Sir Walter Scott, whose assumption of his publisher's debts has always glorified him in our eyes. Even in his most recent public utterances, however he may have been misinformed as to his statistics, Mark's general position, that Christian missionaries should have no share or part whatever in the looting of China, is surely the only defensible or civilized ground to occupy.

One negative trait of Twain must puzzle his Parisian readers, as it would have bewildered no less the Athenian lovers of Aristophanic comedy. Whether serious or irresistibly funny, he is never an immoral, degrading, or foul writer. Here indeed he maintains a truly American character. Franklin's pages were purer than his life. Irving never repeated the frolic-

some coarseness that makes us occasionally skip a sentence in the Knickerbocker narrative. If Whitman's verse were as artistic as it is shapeless, as intelligible to the common man as it is unmeaning, yet the violation of good manners, the reckless, exultant nakedness, would still shut his book out of our sitting rooms: his admiring British public have read only an expurgated edition. Neither Eugene Field's deadly banter, nor Mr. Dooley's brogue, nor George Ade's flood of slang, could ever carry down with impunity a broad hint of filth or obscenity. French critics insist that their light fiction and favorite journals give a wholly false impression of the real tone of morality in social life. In our land we blush neither for the reality nor for the picture. There are unclean Americans, in and out of literature. There are even periodicals for the sporting and fast sets. But such scum floats far indeed from the clear, if shallow, stream of current literature in which our real national life is mirrored.

We discuss Mark Twain here more at length, because the general acclaim of foreign readers, at least, and even of critics, declares him the typical American author of our day. However difficult to traverse, this statement is certainly unsatisfying to our national pride. It is perhaps explained by a wider truth, that our best vitality does not as yet devote itself to creative literature, nor to any of the fine arts. Our men of action write, as they speak, with vigor, clearness, ease, even occasional grace. The popular leaders, for instance, of the two races, Theodore Roosevelt and Booker Washington, are both authors of creditable books; but certainly very

few of us would think, or speak, first of that feature in their many-sided, active careers.

Our favorite writers of the passing day rarely pretend to offer more than light diversion for an idle hour. No American author has approached such an eminence as Dante or Goethe holds, as the largest mind amid a whole people. If Franklin did have a word to which the whole world paused to listen, it was certainly not a spiritual message uttered in the forms of art.

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The interesting story of Bayard Taylor's life has been recorded by his widow, with the skillful aid of Horace E. Scudder; Longfellow, Stoddard, Cranch, Aldrich, gave him poetical tributes, and his portrait is twice sketched by his fellow-Quaker, Whittier, in "Tent on the Beach," and "Last Walk in Autumn."

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

IN the last careful revision, Oscar Fay Adams's "Handbook of American Authors" contains over six thousand names, but still makes no claim of completeness. The present volume could mention only a few score. Such a selection is always more or less unfair. In two respects it is especially difficult.

There are many books of scholars, scientific or professional men, which are important, sometimes extremely well written, yet lie only in the border land, the disputed marches, of literature. The essays of Professor Patton and others in Economics, the work of Professor Giddings and his peers in the still newer science of Sociology, the physical and ethnological volumes of Whitney and Shaler, both entitled "The United States of America," accounts of adventurous travelers, like Stanley and Kennan, Kane and Peary, constructive work in theology or civics, like Elisha Mulford's "Republic of God," or "The Nation," exemplify the problem. Many a devout churchman would give Horace Bushnell a large place in our annals. Woodrow Wilson's sketch in a dozen pages, "A Calendar of Great Americans," should be pondered by every youth: yet he himself would exclude it from "mere literature." Even the sympathetic interpretation of other literatures is not precisely original contribution to our own. In this pleasant

borderland Miss Harriet Waters Preston is the largest figure among the living. Her versions of Virgil's Georgics, and from new and old Provençal, are alike masterly. History and oratory have been included here, but the inconsistency is confessed. Published lives of authors are oftener mentioned in our bibliography than in the text. A certain universality of interest, a certain charm in form as well as in substance, admits a book into the demesne of *belles lettres*; but who shall bar or open the gate?

A more invidious task is the winnowing of lyric poetry. Doubtless every community, if not every family, should have its improvisator, like each dale of Upper Tuscany. Sometimes, even in our unmusical folk, this ideal seems near attainment. But either lyric verse has accomplished its public task, or, what is more likely, other Burnses, Kiplings, Whittiers, must arise, to reveal the poetry in the toil, the feelings, the inner and outer experiences of man, which as yet seem — after Whitman no less than before — unromantic, prosaic, vulgar. Meanwhile, hundreds of eagerly launched but unbought volumes illustrate the failure of verse to retain its hold on our generation. Were it not for the recent reverberations of "Lest we forget," we might doubt whether a new "Ichabod" or "John P. Robinson," even a "Battle Hymn," or any mere winged word, could nowadays reach a nation's ears. The tyranny of "end rhyme," in a language like ours, has undoubtedly lessened the wealth and vitality of lyric utterance. Here the effort has been to mention the few volumes of verse that are known to have aroused some echoes beyond the circle of personal affection. Some of the author's own

favorites are excluded, in the fear of partiality. Our margins are wide, expressly that the student may make his wiser choice.

Epic is perhaps an antiquated form of art, as oratory seems just now, as sculpture seemed to many of us just before St. Gaudens, McMonnies, and French suddenly arose. But drama, surely, is indispensable. Yet we are hardly represented in it at all. Boker was quite isolated, and early disheartened. What effect the text alone of the late James A. Herne's moving melodramas might have upon a reader we can hardly guess. His popular rivals also keep the text of their dramas scrupulously out of print; but there is no great poet, nor any exquisite minor poet, like Stephen Phillips, among them. Longfellow was always a lyrical singer, however extended the forms of his poetry became. So too was Taylor, the most ambitious in form among our less famous artists of verse. The stage waits for the master. From Shakespeare, or even from *Æschylus*, to Phillips, he has usually had to serve at least part of his apprenticeship behind the footlights; but genius may break all rules.

The less ambitious forms of sustained verse, idylls like "Evangeline" or "Snow-Bound," narrative poetry like Longfellow's "Miles Standish," or even like Emerson's "Adirondacks," are strangely obsolescent. Perhaps they, at least, can be revived.

The short prose story suits our breathless reading public, and the making of it has been perfected until it now almost seems to be an art, a craft that can be imparted to clever pupils, or even self-taught by any deft handworker who is not destitute of material in

the form of stirring experience or happy imagination. Whether the popular favorite, Richard Harding Davis, for instance, is still a clever reporter, or already a creator of literature, is a debatable problem. At the same time, some of our truest artists and most earnest thinkers are also adopting the same form. A clever story wins a market and a hearing tenfold more easily and widely than the best essay or poem. This may be in part a passing fashion, just as, from Dryden's time to Goldsmith's, sentiment, narrative, even satire or political lampooning, was usually cast in rhymed couplets.

The larger novel, as a dramatic interpretation of life, has hardly approached again the triumphs of Nathaniel Hawthorne. Our romance is just now either busy preserving the most truthful local color, or else is breaking over the border line of history, and attempting to retell the most brilliant chapters of national experience. As we close these pages young Mr. Churchill's "Crisis" challenges the popular preference for the veteran Dr. Mitchell's "Hugh Wynne."

In our material progress we seem to have come in sight, at least, of our destiny. But as for literature, we prefer to believe that we still but grope in the morning twilight. Longfellow's last verse was full of the gentle optimism he had preached so long:—

"Out of the shadows of night  
The world rolls into light;  
It is daybreak everywhere."

And the wise Autocrat's word has a still clearer and no less hopeful meaning for us in particular:—

“Be patient! On the breathless page  
Still pants our hurried past;  
Pilgrim and soldier, saint and sage,—  
The poet comes the last!”

But the historian of literature, as of any fine art, must at least insist that the highest truth, and consummate beauty, are one and the same ideal: that the life of the nation, as of the individual, can fitly culminate only in the creation of enduring masterpieces, which shall bring inspiration and uplifting to all after time. For such results alone are we grateful to earlier men. By them, and by naught else, can we adequately account for the measureless material advantages poured into our fortunate hands.



## INDEX OF AUTHORS AND WORKS

### A

*Abraham Lincoln* (Lowell), 235.  
*Adam Bede*, 165.  
Adams, Henry, 262.  
Adams, John, 55, 59, 74, 76, 266.  
Adams, Samuel, 56, 74.  
Ade, George, 349.  
Æschylus, 353.  
*African Chief*, 93.  
*After the Burial*, 231.  
*Agassiz*, 237.  
*Ages*, 92.  
*Agnes of Sorrento*, 195.  
Alcott, A. B., 139, 144, 148, 149.  
Alcott, Louise M., 149.  
Aldrich, T. B., 317.  
*Alhambra*, 82.  
Allen, James Lane, 311.  
Allston, Washington, 80, 297.  
*Alone*, 103.  
Alsop, Richard, 66.  
*America*, 217.  
*American Annals*, 106, 258.  
*American Notebooks*, 147, 154, 155, 159, 162.  
*American Scholar*, 130.  
*Army Life in a Black Regiment*, 286, 315.  
Arthur, T. S., 282.  
Astor, William W., 297.  
Audubon, J. J., 108.  
*Aunt Phillis's Cabin*, 196, 301.  
*Autobiography* (Franklin), 83.  
*Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*, 218, 219.

### B

*Backwoodsman*, 97, 108.  
Baldwin, J. G., 302.  
Balzac, 328.  
Bancroft, George, 83, 259-260.  
Bancroft, H. H., 261.  
Barlow, Joel, 64-65, 67, 76, 106.

Bartram, John, 60, 72.  
Bates, Katharine L., 319.  
*Battle Hymn of the Republic*, 94.  
*Bay Psalm Book*, 30, 35, 38.  
Beecher, Henry Ward, 274.  
Beecher, Lyman, 189.  
*Being a Boy*, 358.  
*Bells*, 102.  
*Ben-Hur*, 329.  
Beverley, Robert, 11, 60, 68.  
"Biglow, Hosea," 21, 28.  
*Biglow Papers*, 173, 227, 232, 233, 293, 332.  
Billings, Josh, 242, 347.  
*Birds of America*, 108.  
*Black Cat*, 105.  
*Blithedale Romance*, 166, 167-169.  
*Blue and the Gray*, 303.  
Boker, George H., 83, 341, 342.  
*Bold Hathorne*, 63.  
Bolingbroke, 50.  
Bolles, Frank, 318.  
Bowditch, Nathaniel, 76.  
Boyesen, Hjalmar H., 295.  
*Bracebridge Hall*, 82.  
Bradford, William, 14-16, 17, 36.  
Bradstreet, Anne, 31-32, 35, 40, 42.  
Brooks, Charles T., 321.  
Brooks, Maria Gowen, 241.  
Brooks, Phillips, 274.  
Brown, Alice, 320.  
Brown, Charles Brockden, 65-66, 67, 76, 106.  
Brownell, H. H., 321.  
Browning, Robert, 298.  
Brownson, Orestes, 145.  
Bryant, William Cullen, 90, 91-96, 106, 108, 113.  
*Bunker Hill Speech*, 108.  
Bunner, H. C., 345.  
Bunyan, John, 21.  
*Burial of the Minnisink*, 199.

Burnett, Frances E. H., 297-298.  
 Burns, Robert, 104.  
 Burroughs, John, 141, 251, 318, 356.  
 Byrd, William, 12.  
 Byron, 104.

## C

Cable, George W., 312.  
 Calhoun, John C., 267.  
*Cambridge Thirty Years Ago*, 225, 239.  
*Cape Cod*, 284.  
*Captains Courageous*, 299.  
 Carleton, William, 332.  
 Cary, Alice, 326.  
 Cary, Phoebe, 326.  
*Castle-builders*, 5.  
*Castles in Spain*, 255.  
*Cathedral*, 236, 237.  
 Catherwood, Mary H., 333.  
 Catullus, 104.  
*Cecil Dreeme*, 284.  
*Chambered Nautilus*, 219.  
*Changed*, 198.  
 Channing, William Ellery, 114-115.  
 Channing, William E., 2d, 139, 149, 150, 318.  
 Channing, William H., 143.  
*Cheerful Yesterdays*, 315.  
 Child, F. J., 316.  
 Child, Lydia Maria, 186-189.  
*Children's Hour*, 204.  
 Choate, Rufus, 271.  
*Christmas Banquet*, 158.  
*Christus*, 211, 212.  
 Church, Thomas, 68.  
 Churchill, Winston, 354.  
*Clara Howard*, 106.  
 Clarke, J. F., 115, 145.  
 Clay, Henry, 267-268.  
 Clemens, Samuel. *See* Twain, Mark.  
*Cliff-dwellers*, 364.  
*Cloud on the Way*, 96.  
 Coleridge, Samuel T., 46, 104.  
*Come Forth*, 321.  
*Commemoration Ode*, 236, 342.  
*Compensation*, 138.  
*Conduct of Life*, 138.  
*Conquest of Granada*, 82.  
*Contentment*, 218.  
*Conversations on Some of the Old Poets*, 228.  
 Cooke, P. P., 302.

Cooper, James Fenimore, 78, 85-91, 96, 108.  
 Cotton, John, 40.  
*Courtin'*, 233.  
*Courtship of Miles Standish*, 209, 210, 214.  
 Craddock, C. E., 312.  
 Cranch, C. P., 244.  
 Crawford, F. Marion, 298, 299.  
 Crèvecoeur, Hector Saint-John de, 51, 59-60, 61, 74.  
*Crisis*, 354.  
*Croaker Poems*, 108.  
*Cross of Snow*, 204.  
*Culprit Fay*, 97, 98.  
 Curtis, G. W., 95, 321.

## D

*Daffydowndilly*, 162.  
*Daisy Miller*, 358.  
 Dana, R. H., 108, 242.  
 Dana, R. H., 2d, 242.  
 Dante, 164.  
 Davis, Richard Harding, 354.  
*Days*, 136.  
*Deacon's Masterpiece*, 215, 219, 222.  
*Death of the Flowers*, 96.  
*Declaration of Independence*, 57.  
*Deerslayer*, 87.  
*Defense of Poetry*, 291.  
 Deland, Margaret W. C., 337.  
*Democracy*, 238.  
 De Musset, 104.  
 De Staél, 116.  
*Devil in Manuscript*, 154.  
*Dial*, 132, 146.  
*Dial* (of Chicago), 330-331.  
 Dickinson, Emily, 335.  
*Divine Tragedy*, 212.  
*Dixie*, 302.  
*Dolph Heyliger*, 82, 85.  
 Douglass, Frederick, 282, 295.  
 Drake, J. R., 96.  
 Drake, Samuel Adams, 302.  
*Dred*, 194.  
*Dutchman's Fireside*, 97.  
 Dwight, John S., 243, 244.  
 Dwight, Timothy, 65, 67, 76.

## E

*Each and All*, 128, 136.  
 Eastman, Charles, 295.

Eastman, Elaine G., 335.  
 Eastman, Mary A., 301.  
*Easy Chair*, 322.  
*Echo Club*, 340.  
*Edgar Huntley*, 106.  
 Edwards, Jonathan, 48–50, 60, 70, 72, 114,  
     115.  
 Eggleston, Edward, 330.  
 Eliot, Charles W., 320.  
 Eliot, George, 338.  
 Eliot, John, 40, 42.  
*Elizabeth*, 210.  
*Elsie Venner*, 219, 220, 224.  
 Emerson, Mary M., 122, 123.  
 Emerson, Ralph Waldo, iv, 22, 49, 115,  
     120, 122–138, 144, 145, 149, 151, 245, 251.  
*Emerson the Lecturer*, 131, 226.  
*Endicott and the Red Cross*, 23.  
*English Traits*, 125, 133.  
*Envoi to the Muse*, 138, 223.  
*Eternal Goodness*, 185.  
*Ethan Brand*, 162.  
*Evangeline*, 207–208.  
 Evans, Marion J., 312.  
*Evening Star*, 204.  
 Everett, Edward, 116, 117, 271, 272–273.

## F

*Fable for Critics*, 105, 126, 176, 189, 223–  
     224, 230, 237, 240, 242.  
*Fall of the House of Usher*, 103, 105.  
*Fanshawe*, 108.  
*Federalist*, 57.  
*Ferdinand and Isabella*, 254.  
 Field, Eugene, 331.  
 Fields, Annie A., 317.  
 Fields, J. T., 317.  
 Finch, Francis M., 303.  
*First Snowfall*, 231.  
 Fiske, John, 262, 263.  
*Flood of Years*, 92, 93.  
*Flowers*, 202.  
*Flowers for Children*, 187.  
*Floyd Ireson's Ride*, 181, 185.  
*Fool's Errand*, 358.  
 Foote, Mary H., 333.  
*Footsteps of Angels*, 202.  
*Forerunners*, 138, 223.  
 Foster, Stephen C., 302.  
*Fountain* (Bryant), 96.

*Francesca da Rimini*, 341.  
 Franklin, Benjamin, iv, 50–55, 68, 70, 72,  
     74, 76, 80, 81, 291, 297, 350.  
 French, Alice, 333.  
 Freneau, Philip, 62–63, 67, 74, 76.  
*From my Armchair*, 214.  
 Fuller, H. B., 331.  
 Fuller, Margaret. *See* Ossoli.

## G

*Garland*, Hamlin, 333.  
*Garrison of Cape Ann*, 180.  
 Garrison, William Lloyd, 118, 174, 175.  
 Gayarré, C. E. A., 261.  
*Gentle Boy*, 23, 158, 160.  
*Gilded Age*, 356.  
 Gilder, R. W., 346.  
 Gildersleeve, Basil L., 305.  
 Godwin, 66.  
*Gold Bug*, 105.  
*Golden Legend*, 211, 212, 213.  
*Golden Milestone*, 205.  
 Goodale, Dora R., 335.  
*Good Word for Winter*, 235.  
 Grant, Robert, 319.  
*Gray Champion*, 23, 160.  
*Great Carbuncle*, 160.  
*Great Stone Face*, 160.  
 Greeley, Horace, 345.  
*Guardian Angel*, 219.  
 Guiney, Louise I., 295.

## H

Hale, Edward Everett, 244, 314.  
 Halleck, Fitz-Greene, 97.  
 Hamilton, Alexander, 58.  
*Hanging of the Crane*, 213.  
 Hardy, A. S., 83, 322.  
 Harris, Joel Chandler, 310–311.  
 Harte, F. Bret, 83, 333, 334.  
 Hawthorne, Julian, 297, 318.  
 Hawthorne, Nathaniel, iii, iv, 17, 18, 23,  
     79, 83, 89, 127, 147, 148, 151–172, 354.  
 Hay, John, 328.  
 Hayne, Paul H., 306.  
 Hedge, F. H., 115, 144, 145.  
 Heine, 104.  
 Heyne, 116.  
 Henry, Patrick, 56.

- Herodotus, 252, 253.  
*Hiawatha*, 201, 208–209.  
 Higginson, Thomas Wentworth, iv, 79, 141, 148, 150, 244, 262, 314–315, 344.  
*History of Spanish Literature*, 117.  
*History of the American Navy* (Cooper), 88.  
*History of the Roman Republic*, 147.  
*Hobomok*, 108.  
 Holland, J. G., 245.  
 Holmes, Abiel, 106, 258.  
 Holmes, Oliver Wendell, 21, 32, 51, 96, 121, 136, 137, 140, 215–224, 355.  
*Home as Found*, 88.  
 Homer, 3, 209.  
*Hoosier Schoolmaster*, 356.  
*House of the Seven Gables*, 152, 166, 167.  
 Hovey, Richard, 345.  
 Howe, Julia Ward, 316.  
 Howells, William Dean, 83, 327–328.  
*Hugh Wynne*, 337.  
 Hunt, Helen, 335.  
 Hutchinson, Thomas, 57, 72, 257.  
*Hyperion*, 203.
- I
- Ichabod*, 133, 179, 190, 270.  
*Idle Man*, 108.  
*Iliad* (Bryant), 94.  
*Innocents Abroad*, 286.  
*Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood*, 96.  
*Inverted Torch*, 327.  
 Irving, Washington, iv, 78–85, 96.
- J
- Jackson, Helen Hunt Fiske, 335.  
 James, Henry, 298.  
*Jane Talbot*, 106.  
 Jay, John, 58.  
 Jefferson, Thomas, 57, 58, 59.  
 Jewett, Sarah Orne, 319.  
*John Ward, Preacher*, 338.  
 Johnston, Mary, 13, 313.  
 Johnston, Richard M., 310.  
*Judas Maccabæus*, 210.  
 Judd, Sylvester, 242.  
*Juvenile Miscellany*, 186.
- K
- Kathrina*, 246.  
*Kavanagh*, 203.  
 Kennedy, John P., 100, 250.  
 Key, Francis (Scott), 106, 303.  
 Kipling, Rudyard, 3, 52, 181, 203, 299, 347.  
*Knickerbocker History of New York*, 80, 106.
- L
- Lady or the Tiger?* 360.  
 Landor, Walter S., 231.  
 Lanier, Sidney, 307–309.  
*Last Leaf*, 217, 222.  
*Last of the Mohicans*, 87.  
*Last Walk in Autumn*, 181, 183.  
 Lea, H. C., 257.  
*Leaves from Margaret Smith's Journal*, 18.  
*Legends of the Province House*, 24.  
 Leland, Charles Godfrey, 338.  
*Liberator*, 174, 185.  
*Life of Washington* (Irving), 83.  
*Life of Washington* (Marshall), 106.  
*Life of Washington* (Paulding), 97.  
 Lincoln, Abraham, 58, 273, 275.  
*Little Lord Fauntleroy*, 360.  
*Little Women*, 286.  
*Living Temple*, 219.  
 Lodge, Henry Cabot, 261.  
 Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, iv, 17, 35, 120, 121, 197–214, 354.  
 Longstreet, A. B., 302.  
*Looking toward Sunset*, 187.  
 Lounsbury, T. R., 323.  
 Lowell, James Russell (*see also* Biglow, Hosea), iv, 83, 96, 131, 143, 224–240, 292.  
 Lucy Larcom, 183.
- M
- Mabie, Hamilton W., 346.  
 Macaulay, T. B., 82.  
 Madison, James, 58.  
*Main Street*, 24, 160.  
*Maine Woods*, 284.  
*Manners*, 138.  
*Man without a Country*, 284, 314.  
*Marble Faun*, 179.  
*Marco Bozzaris*, 97.  
*Margaret*, 242.  
*Margaret Smith's Journal*, 18, 24.

Mather, Cotton, 44, 46–48, 60.  
 Mather, Increase, 44, 47, 68.  
 Matthews, J. Brander, 345.  
*Mayday*, 140.  
*Maypole of Merry Mount*, 23.  
 Melville, Herman, 246.  
*Mezzo Cammin*, 205, 207.  
*Michael Angelo*, 210, 214.  
 Miller, Cincinuatus H., 334.  
 Milton, John, 27, 46, 80, 114.  
*Minister's Wooing*, 195.  
 Mitchell, Donald G., 323.  
 Mitchell, S. Weir, 337.  
*Mockingbird, To the*, 309.  
 Moody, William V., 332.  
*Moosehead Journal*, 239.  
*Moral Pieces*, 106.  
*Morituri Salutamus*, 199, 214.  
 Morton, Thomas, 17, 38.  
*Mosses from an Old Manse*, 127, 157, 158.  
 Motley, J. L., 83, 256–257.  
*Murders in the Rue Morgue*, 105.  
 Murfree, Mary N., 312.  
 Murray, Lindley, 76.  
*Musa*, 223.  
*My Garden Acquaintance*, 226, 239.  
*My Kinsman Major Molineux*, 160.  
*My Lost Youth*, 198.  
*My Psalm*, 185.

## N

*Nature* (Emerson), 128.  
*Naulahka*, 364.  
*Nearer Home*, 326.  
*New Adam and Eve*, 158.  
*New England Girlhood*, 362.  
*New England Tragedies*, 211.  
*Nina Gordon*, 194.  
 Norton, Charles Eliot, iv, 35, 316.

## O

*Odyssey* (Bryant), 94.  
 O'Hara, Theodore, 302.  
*Old Burying Ground*, 185.  
*Old Ironsides*, 216, 217, 222.  
*Old Swimmin'-hole*, 360.  
*Oldtown Folks*, 195.  
*Order for a Picture*, 326.  
 O'Reilly, John Boyle, 319.  
 Ossoli, Margaret Fuller, 144, 169.

Otis, James, 55, 72.  
*Our Old Home*, 169.

## P

Page, Thomas Nelson, 311.  
 Paine, Thomas, 50, 56, 74, 76.  
 Palfrey, John G., 260.  
*Pandora*, 210, 214.  
*Papers on Literature and Art*, 147.  
 Parker, Theodore, 118, 145, 274.  
 Parkman, Francis, 90, 263–264.  
 Parsons, T. W., 245.  
*Passe Rose*, 322.  
*Pathfinder*, 87.  
 Paulding, J. K., 97, 106, 108.  
 Payne, John H., 297.  
*Pearl of Orr's Island*, 195.  
 Penn, William, 144.  
 Phillips, Stephen, 341, 343, 353.  
 Phillips, Wendell, 118, 270.  
*Philothea*, 187.  
 Piatt, J. J., 329.  
 Piatt, Sarah M. B., 329.  
 Pike, Albert, 309.  
*Pilot*, 88.  
 Pindar, 104.  
 Pinkney, E. C., 302.  
*Pioneers*, 86.  
 Poe, Edgar Allan, iii, 98–105, 108, 224.  
*Poet at the Breakfast-Table*, 218, 225.  
*Poor Chiffonier*, 248.  
 Pope, 50.  
*Prairie* (Cooper), 87.  
*Prairies* (Bryant), 96.  
*Precaution*, 86.  
 Prescott, W. H., 121, 253–255.  
*Prescott, Life of*, 117.  
*Present Crisis*, 94, 231.  
 Preston, Harriet W., 352.  
 Preston, Margaret J., 312.  
*Prince and Pauper*, 360.  
*Professor at the Breakfast-Table*, 218.  
*Prometheus*, 231.  
*Prudence Palfrey*, 356.  
*Psalm of Life*, 202.

## R

*Rain-Dream*, 96.  
*Ramona*, 335.  
 Randolph, John, 267.

*Raven*, 101.  
 Read, T. B., 340.  
*Rebels*, 108, 186, 188.  
*Red Rover*, 88.  
 Repllier, Agnes, 337.  
*Representative Men*, 132.  
 Rhodes, J. F., 261.  
*Rhaecus*, 231.  
*Rhymed Lesson*, 216.  
 Richards, Laura E. H., 320.  
 Riggs, Kate D. S. W., 336.  
 Riley, J. W., 329-330.  
 Ripley, Ezra, 127.  
 Ripley, George, 145, 150.  
*Robert of Lincoln*, 96.  
 Roberts, C. G. D., 297.  
*Roderick Hudson*, 358.  
 Roe, E. P., 246.  
*Romola*, 164.  
 Roosevelt, Theodore, 261, 349.  
*Roughing It*, 356.  
 Rousseau, 50.  
 Ryan, "Father," 303.

## S

*Saga of King Olaf*, 213.  
*Salamagundi Papers*, 80, 106.  
 Sanborn, F. B., 318.  
 Sandys, George, 9, 38.  
 Sappho, 326.  
 Saxe, John G., 242.  
*Scarlet Letter*, 18, 152, 155, 156, 163, 164-166, 167, 171.  
 Scudder, Horace E., 315.  
 Scudder, Vida D., iii, 19, 319.  
 Sedgwick, Catharine M., 241.  
*Seven Tales of My Native Land*, 154.  
*Seven Vagabonds*, 154, 159.  
 Sewall, Samuel, 33-34, 35, 42, 44.  
 Shakespeare, 11.  
 Shaler, N. S., 318, 351.  
 Shaw, Henry W., 243.  
*Shore Acres*, 364.  
 Sigourney, Mrs. Lydia H., 106, 241.  
*Silas Lapham*, 360.  
 Sill, Edward R., 334.  
 Simms, William G., 303-305.  
*Skeleton in Armor*, 201, 203.  
*Sketch-Book*, 81-82.  
*Sleeper*, 102.  
 Smith, F. H., 312-313.

Smith, John, 8, 9, 10, 36, 38.  
 Smith, Samuel F., 217.  
*Snow-Bound*, 18, 176, 177.  
*Snow Image*, 153, 159.  
*Song of the Kansas Emigrants*, 179.  
 Sophocles, 104.  
*Spanish Student*, 210, 255.  
 Sparks, Jared, 258.  
 Spofford, Harriet P., 320.  
*Spy*, 86.  
 Stanton, Frank L., 309.  
*Star-Spangled Banner*, 106, 303.  
 Stedman, Edmund Clarence, 343-344.  
 Stillman, William J., 297.  
 Stockton, Frank R., 346.  
 Stoddard, Elizabeth D. B., 342.  
 Stoddard, Richard H., 95, 96, 342.  
 Story, William W., 247-249.  
 Stowe, Harriet Beecher, 189-196.  
 Strachey, William, 10, 11, 13, 36.  
*Strenuous Life*, 368.  
 Stuart, Ruth McE., 312.  
 Sumner, Charles, 118, 270-271.  
*Suthin' in the Pastoral Line*, 233.  
 Swinburne, 104.

## T

Tabb, John B., 308-309.  
*Tales of a Traveler*, 82.  
*Tales of a Wayside Inn*, 213.  
*Tamerlane*, 108.  
*Tanglewood Tales*, 167.  
 Taylor, J. Bayard, 83, 96, 338-340, 353.  
 Tennyson, 104.  
*Terminus*, 134, 136.  
*Thanatopsis*, 92, 93, 108.  
 Thanet, Octave, 333.  
 Thaxter, Celia, 320.  
 Thomas, Edith M., 327.  
 Thompson, J. Maurice, 329.  
 Thompson, Will H., 303.  
 Thoreau, Henry David, 121, 138-143.  
*Threnody*, 131, 231.  
 Thwaites, R. G., 261.  
 Ticknor, George, 116-121.  
 Timrod, Henry, 305-306.  
 Timrod, William H., 305.  
 Titcomb, Timothy, 245.  
*To a Child*, 204.  
*To Have and To Hold*, 368.

*To Helen*, 103.

*Tom Sawyer*, 358.

*Town Pump*, 160.

*Tragic Muse*, 362.

Trowbridge, J. T., 315.

*True Relation of Virginia*, 8.

Trumbull, John, 63–64, 67, 76.

Twain, Mark, 78, 346–350.

*Twice-told Tales*, 158.

*Two Angels*, 205.

## U

Uhland, 194.

*Ulalume*, 102.

*Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 173, 190–194, 196.

*Unleavened Bread*, 319.

## V

Van Dyke, Henry, 346.

*Vanishers*, 138, 223.

*Venetian Life*, 284.

Very, Jones, 243.

*Via Crucis*, 368.

*Village Uncle*, 159.

*Virtuoso's Collection*, 158, 162.

*Vision of Sir Launfal*, 97, 234.

*Voiceless*, 222.

*Voices of the Night*, 203.

Voltaire, 50.

*Voluntaries*, 134.

## W

*Wake-robin*, 356.

*Walden*, 139, 142.

Wallace, Lewis, 329.

Ward, Artemus, 347.

Ward, Elizabeth S. P., 321.

Ward, Nathaniel, 27–28, 35, 38, 40.

Warner, Charles Dudley, 300, 323–324.

Warner, Susan, 249.

Warren, Joseph, 74.

Washington, Booker T., 295, 349.

Washington, George, 58, 72, 76.

*Waterwitch*, 108.

*Wealth*, 138.

Webster, Daniel, 76, 108, 179, 190, 266, 267, 268–270, 271.

Webster, Noah, 108.

*Wedding Journey*, 356.

*Week on the Concord and Merrimac*, 142.

Wendell, Barrett, 82, 148, 318.

Whipple, E. P., 246–247.

*White Old Maid*, 160.

Whitman, Walter, 249–250, 251, 343, 349, 352.

Whitney, Adeline D. T., 316.

Whitney, William D., 323.

Whittier, John Greenleaf, 18, 96, 175–185.

Wiggin, Kate D. S., 336.

Wigglesworth, Michael, 32, 35, 42.

*Wigwam and Cabin*, 278.

Wilde, R. H., 302.

Wilkins, Mary E., 319.

Williams, Roger, 28–30, 35, 40, 42.

Wilson, Woodrow, 351.

Winslow, Edward, 15, 36.

Winsor, Justin, 261.

Winthrop, John, 25–26, 34, 38.

Winthrop, Robert C., 26, 271, 272.

Winthrop, Theodore, 26, 345.

*Woman in 19th Century*, 146.

*Wonder-Book*, 166, 167.

Woodberry, George E., 344.

*Wood Notes*, 134, 149.

Woolman, John, 59, 61, 72.

Wordsworth, 46.

*Wreck of the Hesperus*, 203.

## Y

*Yankee Gypsies*, 176.

*Year's Life, A*, 228.

*Yemassee*, 304.

*Young Goodman Brown*, 158, 160.



## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INDEX

[NOTE.—This list includes especially histories of literature, biographies of authors, and in general secondary work rather than pure literature. As a rule no allusion is here made to the works of authors who themselves appear in the body of the book. In all such cases the student should refer directly to the brief bibliography which follows each chapter or section.]

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- Dall, Caroline H., *Margaret and her Friends* (Little), 147.  
Dean, J. W., *Michael Wigglewoorth's Day of Doom*, 35.  
Drake, S. A., *New England Legends and Folklore* (Little), 185, 302.

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Ellis, George E., *Diary of Samuel Sewall*, 35.

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Farnham, C. H., *Life of Francis Parkman*, 264.

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Frothingham, O. B., *George Ripley* (Houghton), 150.

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Grimm, Hermann, *Literature* (Cupples), 137.

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Hawthorne, Julian, *Nathaniel Hawthorne and his Wife* (Houghton), 148, 172.

Higginson, Thomas W., *Margaret Fuller Ossoli* (Houghton), 147; *Contemporaries*

(Houghton), 150, 251; *Old Cambridge* (Macmillan), 214, 240.

Holmes, Oliver Wendell, *Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Houghton), 137.

Howe, Julia Ward, *Margaret Fuller* (Little, Brown), 147.

Howells, William D., *Literary Friends and Acquaintances* (Harper), 214, 224, 240.

## I

Irving, Pierre, *Life and Letters of Washington Irving* (Putnam), 84.

## J

James, Henry, *Hawthorne* (Harper), 172.

Jameson, J. F., *History of Historical Writing in America* (Houghton), 121, 264.

## K

Kennedy, W. S., *H. W. Longfellow* (Lothrop), 214.

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## TOPICS FOR ESSAYS OR LECTURES

1. Our debt to older races and literatures.
2. Epochs and divisions in our history and intellectual life.
3. Life, character, and writings of Captain John Smith.
4. Social conditions in the South, and their effect on literature, illustrated by the life and writings of Strachey, Beverley, Byrd.
5. Pilgrim and Puritan: Bradford and Winthrop.
6. Seventeenth-century authorship, from Roger Williams to Samuel Sewall.
7. Relation of Sewall and Cotton Mather to the witchcraft delusion.
8. The Mather "dynasty."
9. Contrast between the early and the mature writings of Jonathan Edwards.
10. Franklin's influence on the civic life of Philadelphia.
11. General influence of Franklin on our national character.
12. Services of Franklin to the cause of independence.
13. Influence of oratory in the Revolution and at present.
14. Virginian and New England statesmen in the Revolutionary epoch.
15. Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence.
16. Hamilton and the *Federalist*.
17. Washington's state papers and speeches.
18. Revolutionary poetry: Freneau, Barlow, and Trumbull.
19. Merits and faults of Brockden Brown's style.
20. Irving's Hudson River legends.
21. Influence of England on Irving.
22. Spanish influence in our literature.
23. Cooper's Indians, and other sketches of Indian character.
24. Scott's "Pirate" and Cooper's "Pilot."
25. Nature as viewed by Wordsworth and by Bryant.
26. Realism and fancy in Drake's "Culprit Fay."
27. Form and content of Poe's verse.
28. Moral purpose and sanity of Poe and Hawthorne.
29. Emerson and Transcendentalism.

30. The New England Lyceum.
31. Brook Farm.
32. Thoreau's hermitage, and his influence on later writers.
33. Margaret Fuller's demands for women, and the extent to which they are now granted.
34. Influence of Garrison on Whittier's life.
35. Effect of abolition on the careers of Mrs. Child and Mrs. Stowe.
36. Southern indignation over "Uncle Tom's Cabin."
37. Antagonism of scholarship and poetic imagination.
38. Longfellow's sources.
39. Longfellow's and Tennyson's dramatic works.
40. Classicism in our literature.
41. Influence of Lowell's critical work on his poetry.
42. The "medicated" novels of Dr. Holmes.
43. The Yankee dialect.
44. The short story in the hands of Hawthorne and his successors.
45. Hawthorne's treatment of witchcraft.
46. Influence of Italy and art on our poetry.
47. The forms of Whitman's verse.
48. Artistic form and substance in historical composition.
49. Relation of Prescott's and Motley's topics to the general story of our own people.
50. Personal relations of Ticknor, Prescott, Motley, etc.
51. Attempts to supply a single adequate history of the American people.
52. Parkman's life work.
53. Present methods of historical composition.
54. Ephemeral nature of oratory.
55. Political oratory: Clay, Calhoun, and Webster.
56. The elements of Webster's style.
57. The agitators: Garrison, Phillips, Sumner, Beecher, Curtis.
58. Everett and Lincoln at Gettysburg.
59. The South in literature before and during the war.
60. The new school of Southern writers.
61. Alien (*i.e.* non-English) elements in our literature.
62. Centralizing of literary workers on Manhattan.
63. Growth of the magazines, and literary quality in newspapers.
64. Cosmopolitan tendencies in our literature.
65. Denationalized authors.
66. Decay of poetry. Successors of Longfellow and Lowell.

67. The Hoosiers.
68. The Far West in literature.
69. Literary theory and practice of Mr. Howells.
70. Famous stories of boyhood: Aldrich, Warner, Twain, etc.
71. Literature and journalism, antagonistic or helpful? (*E.g.* to Curtis, Stoddard, R. H. Davis.)
72. Novels based on American history.
73. Religious novels ("Ben-Hur," "Come Forth," "Quo Vadis").
74. "Local color" in fiction.
75. Dialect, fiction, and poetry.
76. American humor, from Franklin to Twain.
77. Frontier between scholarship and literature.
78. Notable translations (Longfellow's "Dante," Taylor's "Faust," Bryant's "Homer," etc.).
79. Relative rank of American literature.
80. The future of literature.



















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